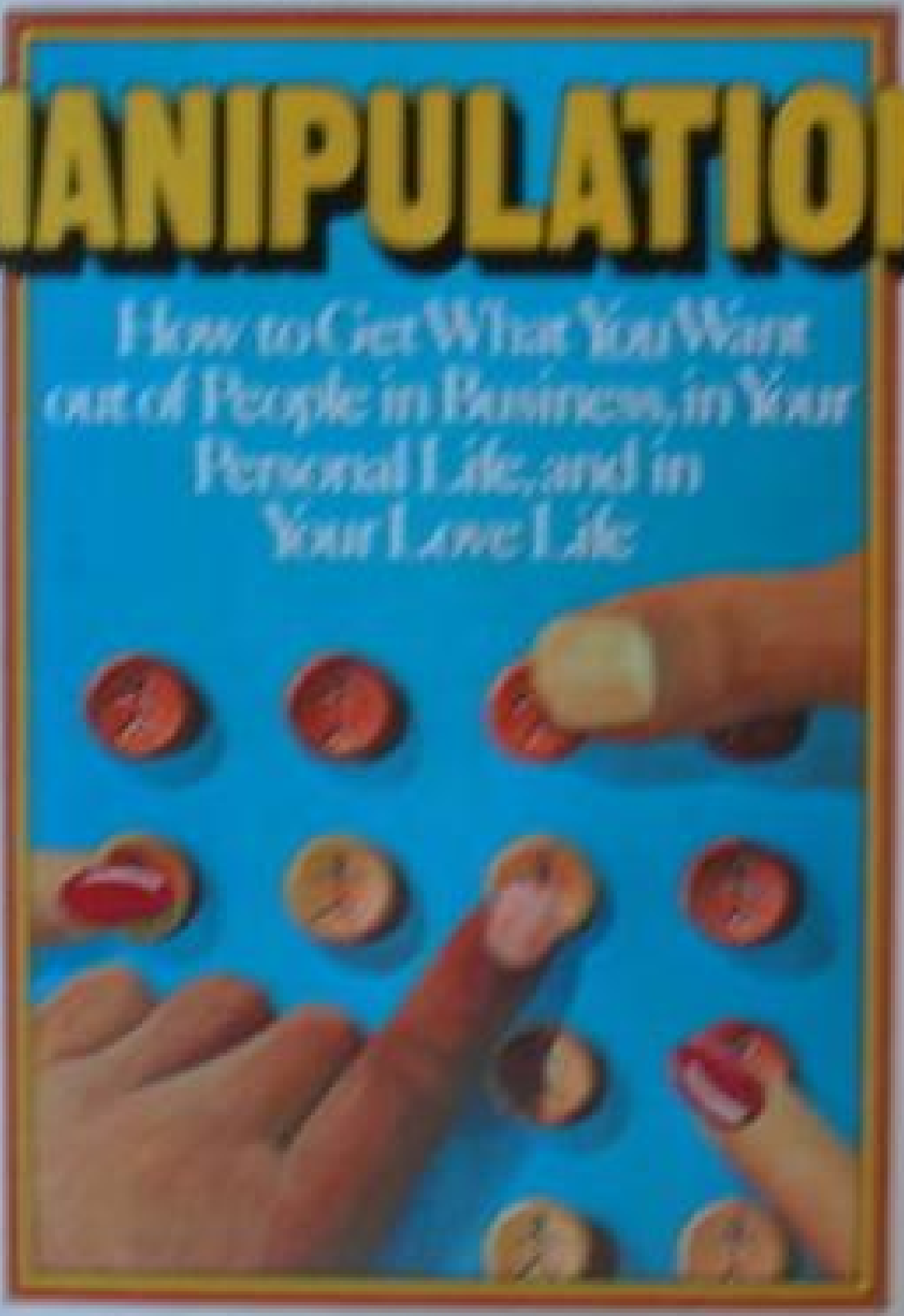
The Art of

MANIPULATION

How to Get What You Want out of People in Business, in Your Personal Life, and in Your Love Life



R.B. Sparkman

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THE Art OF Manipulation

R. B. Sparkman

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THE Art OF Manipulation

CHAPTER I

Five Percent of the People Manipulate the Other Ninety-five Percent

WHAT DO THESE MANIPULATORS KNOW THAT THE REST OF US DON'T?

HAVE YOU WONDERED why some people nearly always get what they want from other people, while you can only manage to do so every now and then? I certainly have, and that question had badgered me for years.

Why can one person close the big business deal where ninety-five percent of the people who tried have failed? Why can some men charm and manipulate women into almost anything, when others couldn't get the time of day from them? Why do cer-

tain women seem to get anything they want from men? Surely it comes down to the fact that these people are shrewd in the art of manipulating and handling people. But how do they do it? What are their techniques?

As an answer, this book reports the tactics these manipulators use to get what they want in business situations as well as in their personal lives—much of it in their own words. And it's all tried-and-true street wisdom, not the kind of thing you customarily read in books. As a result, you'll find it natural to put these tactics to work getting what you want from people. They're more comfortable in action, anyway, than they are lying dormant on the written page.

The sole criterion: Does it work?

Any method I report here can be judged by only one criterion: Does it work well enough to get me what I want? These tactics need not be moral, inspiring, or philosophically sound. They just have to work. Otherwise the manipulators who tutored me in the art of "people-handling" would have long ago discarded them. What remains is the distilled street wisdom of people who either prospered or starved according to their ability to persuade others against their will. I believe their straight-from-the-jungle techniques will work better for you than the ivory tower, armchair theorizing done by most books on the subject.

Necessity forced me to turn to some rather unorth-

odox characters as sources for this book on manipulation. I'd already exhausted the more respectable alternatives by taking a master's degree in advertising. But studying Madison Avenue's methods in detail taught me very little. I found that depending on college and books to teach me how to handle people was like going to church to learn how to sin. They just didn't seem to know much about it.

Not until I put myself square in the middle of street-wise hustlers, manipulators, and con artists did I gain a working grasp of manipulation. In the process my shady tutors conned me out of considerable money. But I emerged after a year well versed in the art of extracting what I want from people.

Learning the art

Manipulators and con artists flock to boom towns where the money comes easy and plentiful, and then move on when the prosperity plays out. Houston, Texas, was just such a boom town in the early 1970s as the energy shortage in the rest of the country pumped a deluge of easy dollars into this city built on oil. By moving to Houston, I had no trouble contacting con artists, because hordes of their numbers roosted in the bars there.

Shortly after I arrived there, I took an apartment with Hardy, a habitual drunk who, when sober, is probably the most masterly manipulator I have ever known or expect to know. Hardy was panting hot on the heels of a café waitress he had chased into town.

He had just departed Mobile, Alabama, in favor of Houston when the easy money had played out in Dixie.

The walking personification of the silver-tongued devil, Hardy could talk anybody into nearly anything—women included. And he had successfully hawked everything from stock to land to encyclopedias door-to-door. But despite the fact that he always made fabulous money, I doubt that Hardy ever worked over three weeks at a stretch before one of his drinking sprees got him fired. He was my major tutor while I studied manipulation.

We soon added another charlatan, who was eventually to gull me of a considerable amount of money, to our living arrangement. He had drifted into town from Dallas, Texas, as that city joined the rest of the country in the recession of the 1970s.

Next door to our apartment lived a shyster from California who claimed to be a millionaire's son, and who had never done the proverbial honest day's work in his life. He had either stolen or conned someone out of everything he owned. The man had so many aliases and bogus pieces of identification that I never did figure out his real name.

Finally I enlisted as "visiting lecturers" on the subject of manipulation two con artist friends of the Dallas man. One had abandoned his New York environs for Houston due to the recession back east. And the other was a hot-check artist from El Paso, Texas.

These made up my complement of experts in the

art of people-handling. Bear in mind that none of these men fit the category of the dangerous criminal. As far as I know, there wasn't a criminal record in the bunch. Although none except Hardy demonstrated an inkling of honesty, they didn't turn their fast bucks by outright thievery.

Instead they generally made their money by using people with a jewel cutter's precision. (Mostly by selling them cars, stock, land, or possibly a completely worthless item at exorbitant prices—all the while convincing their hapless dupe that they were doing him a favor.)

Nor do I mean to imply that the average person would find these men despicable. Certainly a modicum of charm is essential to the success of any manipulator. And they had plenty of it. In fact I've never been charmed as quickly by a group of people. With only one exception they were all hilarious storytellers. Almost any normal person would be quite taken by them, at least until their ruthless nature reared its ugly head. But by that time it was usually too late.

Women as a rule also found them irresistible, so you can imagine that they kept up a constant parade of females in and out of our apartment. In fact Hardy was so confident of his abilities as a latter-day Casanova that he paid for a motel room before he went out cruising the bars to pick up women.

The key to manipulation

During my year of this near-cockroach existence, I discovered the key to the mystery of manipulation: a thorough understanding of human nature. First the manipulator must grasp an intimate understanding of human nature. Then he exploits these deeply ingrained human tendencies, instincts, and weaknesses. In the course of this book, I start with the basic traits of human nature and describe the tactics manipulators use to capitalize on them.

You can experience their methods by proxy as you read about them. After that you should find it easy to apply them to the situations where you need manipulation. Because the ever-present traits of human nature are universal, once you understand how to exploit them in one situation, other applications come naturally.

Learn the techniques quickly.

I hope that by reading this book, you'll learn to harness the considerable power of human nature to get what you want—without having to pay the dues that such an ability usually demands. These tactics are easy to learn from someone who's willing to teach you, but figuring them out on your own through trial-and-error would probably take a lifetime. I hope this book cuts your period of trial-and-error to an absolute minimum, or possibly eliminates it altogether.

Figuring out the tactics of people-handling on your

own is usually a syrup-slow process. It's hard because these techniques run contrary to what you're used to doing. At times you'll have to learn to make yourself shut up when your instincts are goading you to "Scream at him!" Or you may have to feign disinterest when your insides plead, "Tell him you're desperate for his business."

As a result of these unaccustomed stances manipulation often requires of you, only a handful of people—around five percent by my estimate—ever learn to get what they want from other people. The other ninety-five percent just plod along following their natural instincts, unable to tell why they nearly always come out on the short end of situations.

I venture to guess that these people, frustrated by their personal failure, flock in droves to John Wayne movies. There they get their vicarious satisfaction by watching The Duke, by golly, see that things are damn well done his way. Unfortunately Wayne's clench-jaw method of riding his gut instincts to victory only works on the silver screen, not in reality. A person simply can't follow his impulses and still get what he wants from people. Impulses are a fool's compass.

Finally I must confess that few of the techniques in this book represent original thoughts of my own. As a reporter I mostly relate what the old hands in the manipulative art taught me. I'm giving you advice from people who are much more clever than I am. In a sense, I let them take the years of hard knocks necessary to develop these tactics, and paid as few dues

as possible myself. I would have undoubtedly been twenty years developing them on my own.

Also, in my role as a reporter, I only describe what works—not what is moral. These tactics aren't either moral or immoral. Like most powerful tools, they can be used for either good or bad ends. For instance, Lyndon Johnson, a master in the use of political manipulation, used the same tactics to gain the passage of good civil rights laws as he used to marshal support for his questionable Vietnam policies. You see, how you use these methods determines whether they will be right or wrong.

Undoubtedly there's a great potential for abuse inherent in these techniques; I can only hope that you'll apply them toward decent ends. I also trust that the publicity this book gives the methods of manipulators will awaken some of the gullible people in the world from their trances. Then maybe they can defend themselves against being used by these ruthless individuals.

CHAPTER II

Tactic 1: Character Types to Watch Out For

TIPS THAT TELL YOU YOU'RE ABOUT TO BE TAKEN

DURING THE TIME I lived among the five con artists, they lied to me and gulled me of so much of my money that I was forced to cultivate cunning to survive. In a situation where the clever ones eat the gullible, developing wariness isn't a matter of choice. Luckily Hardy helped me by providing the kind of knowledge that all but veteran manipulators are ignorant of.

Hardy taught me to recognize the subtle markings of a situation that betray a well-laid deceit. If you detect these tipoffs in a situation, you should develop cold feet, and become mule-stubborn about releasing any money to a person who shows these signs. In

fact you probably should show him the door, and end your association with him altogether.

Watch out for those who protest too much.

Remember Shakespeare's "Methinks thou doth protest too much"? (In other words, "You've said it so many times that you make me suspect you're lying about it.") Note the striking parallel between Shakespeare and this situation, where I took a small financial beating.

As I entered my apartment one night, my roommate told me that Hardy had just called me from jail. He'd been arrested for public drunkenness. Since Hardy considered me his "only real friend in the world," he asked me to come and post bail for him.

Hardy begged me to hurry because he claimed to be in a standing-room-only cell with "a bunch of stinking, vomiting slobs." Hardy was always meticulous about his personal cleanliness. And he insisted on a hospital-clean apartment, so I knew he must be enduring a living hell. But I also suspected that the filthy jail might prove excellent therapy for his desire to get drunk in the future. A sloppy, heaving deterrent.

"You'll never regret this. Just as soon as I get the money, I'll see that you're paid back. You just don't know how much I appreciate this," were Hardy's grateful words. He told me this as we walked away from the jail after I bailed him out. But despite this bountiful outpouring of assurance on his part, I never

received a dime of the money. He left town still owing me two hundred dollars.

Any time the other person stresses something too much, the street-educated mind begins to doubt him. Often this "protesting too much" provides learned ears a telltale clue that the other party is purposely misleading him.

When a liar is pulling a fast one, he often soothe-talks you in a too-reassuring, too-demonstrative way. Uncomfortable about his lie, he nervously overcompensates for his lack of substance.

When a person tells you over and over how he's going to make money for you on a deal, and pats you on the back saying, "I want to see you get everything you've got coming to you," watch out. He's probably patting you on the back so he can feel a soft place to put the knife in.

If you stand to gain a lot from a deal a person proposes, the terms of the deal will usually speak for themselves—without his droning on and on about your potential benefits. Look out if he repeats—I say repeats—what you stand to gain over and over.

If a person proposes a deal, he must have something to gain from it, or he wouldn't waste his breath. And you can bet that the more the other party harps on about making you money, the more he stands to gain from the deal at your expense. A person who proposes a deal with terms that favor you doesn't feel a need to sell it excessively. He knows that good terms speak for themselves. So he assumes something of a take-it-or-leave-it stance.

The same dynamics that are at work in your business dealings also show up in your personal relationships. A person you can trust doesn't need to remind you of it. His or her behavior in the relationship will speak for itself, if he can be trusted. If a person feels a need to remind you of his trustworthiness, he's probably trying to use you.

Every con man who ever bilked me out of money took pains to remind me that I could trust him before he did it. Here I give you their exact words:

Hardy, $200: "You'll never regret this. Just as soon as I get the money, I'll see that you're paid back. I've always paid you everything I owed you."
(Which was true, except for the last $200 that I never received a dime of.)

The Dallas man, $800 (I'll explain this one later): "Rick, just tell me; have I ever failed to pay you a penny I owed you?" (No, except for the last 80,000 pennies you owed me, none of which I ever saw again.)

Con man from New York, $40: "I'll pay you for these long distance calls the minute you get the phone bill. You can count on me." (He made those calls on my phone while I was at work, and when I got the phone bill, he denied owing me for them. So I never saw the money.)

Hot-check artist from El Paso, Texas, $0: "Rick, I'd never cheat a friend." (I realized that he had an easy out when he decided not to pay me. I would no

longer be classified as a "friend," and he didn't promise me that he wouldn't cheat an enemy. So I hooted at his $125 loan request.)

Surely you've grasped the moral of the story: When a person tells you several times that you can trust him, or if he tells you how much he's going to do for you, panic and run. In no case should you enter into any dealings with him that involve legal tender.

Similarly you'll run into people who "protest too much" in your private relationships that don't involve money. As just one example, if you're a woman and you meet a man who claims to be a strong supporter of women's liberation, you might suspect that something is afoot. Men don't naturally assume such a strong affirmative position on women's rights. So you should wonder whether the one who does it is trying to use you. I've heard several women complain about men attempting to fast-talk them this way.

If a man really feels this way, his behavior in the relationship should speak for itself. Then he shouldn't feel any nervous need to remind you of it—or to compensate with words for his lack of substance.

One way to know whether you're dealing with a trustworthy person

Hardy used a commonsense tactic for sizing up a person's trustworthiness: He listened to that person tell the same story twice. As he listened, his mind

carefully tape-recorded all the details to see if they matched in both versions. Then he could tell how consistent the two stories were. This degree of consistency was his gauge of a person's honesty.

If a person relates a story differently each time he tells it, you're probably dealing with an untrustworthy liar. Habitual liars soon get so used to changing stories to fit the purpose at hand that they often forget how they told the story the first time.

There's another closely related clue that should tell you a person's too crooked to deal with. If you ever hear a person you trust lie to someone else, it's time you canceled your trust.

Hardy told me, "If a man lies to somebody else, he'll lie to you. What makes you believe he'll think any more of you down the line when it'll suit his purpose to lie to you?"

You see, people live by an internal code they have. If their code lets them lie to an enemy, they'll do the same to a "friend" when it will get them something they want. People basically treat their "friends" the same way they treat everybody else. After all, it's easy to reclassify a friend as an "enemy" when he gets in the way of something you're after, isn't it?

Never trust a person who lies to somebody else, but says he won't lie to you because you're a pal. Your "pal" status isn't set in concrete, you know.

Most of the users and con artists I lived around lied this way—casually and as naturally as they breathed. So you should be wary of dealing with people who don't stick pretty close to the truth in every situation.

They're likely to be ruthless users. And Hardy's tactic can tip you off to who these people are.

Beware of people who "once had money but lost it."

Nearly every con artist I ever met had amassed a great deal of wealth, but bad luck had robbed him of it—at least to hear him tell it. The Dallas man, who later conned me out of $800, claimed to have once been a millionaire. Hardy claimed to have once had a great deal of money. And the California con man, who lived next door to me, claimed that his father was a millionaire.

But despite all this alleged money in their backgrounds, none of these men seemed able to come up with his rent consistently at the beginning of the month—with the exception of Hardy, whose pockets were usually swollen with money.

Obviously most of these riches-to-rags stories would prove pure fiction if a person investigated them. But they do serve a valuable purpose to the street-educated listener: They're a dead giveaway that you're dealing with a charlatan. Of course I'm not saying that no honest man has ever lost his wealth. But even if this is the case, you're smart to avoid any financial dealings with him anyway.

If you hear this old song and dance from someone, you're probably dealing with a con artist who's setting you up to play the dupe. A large percentage of the world's con artists use this line to give people confidence in the idea that a once-rich man has made money before, and can do it again for them.

Even if a person you know is honest hands you the riches-to-rags line, you'd be foolish to take financial advice from him. If he knows how to handle money, why did he lose all of his? When a man who's rich now tells you how to invest your money, you might want to scoop up his advice. Chances are he knows how to make money better than a broke man does.

For instance, the Dallas man claimed to have been a millionaire before the recession killed his business. And at one time he tried to convince me to buy a used car he heard about for $300. He said I could resell the car for $700 easily within the week, thereby more than doubling my money. After I declined the deal, he somehow got his hands on $300 and bought the car himself.

But this "gold mine on wheels" cost him $400 in repairs the first two weeks he owned it. And he wound up having to keep it because he couldn't recoup the money he had tied up in it. So much for taking financial advice from people who either did have or claim to have had a fortune, then lost it.

A dead giveaway that you're dealing with an incompetent

The educational world has a word for a teacher who overlooks the important ideas in a student's paper, and chooses to criticize instead a misplaced comma or some such trivial detail. He is called a "pedant." The business jungle also has a term for a person who acts this way. It's "a failure."

The person who emphasizes details and fails to

take care of the most important things first can only fail in the business world. In every business I've seen, you can't take care of all the situations that need attention, no matter how hard you work. So the shrewd person lets the nonvital details go and concentrates on taking care of the crucial problems.

For example, an intelligent manager takes care of sales, the thing that makes a profit, and lets strict enforcement of the dress code go. After all, the most stringently enforced dress code in the world never made a dime in profit for a business.

A person can't satisfy all the demands on his time. So when you see someone emphasizing minor details, it's a dead giveaway that he's an incompetent. While he's squandering his time on the nonessential, you can bet the essential is going undone. As ridiculous as this behavior looks on paper, you'll find it surprisingly common in the business world.

When you see these kinds of perverted priorities in one of your business associates, don't hitch your wagon to his star—even if he's your boss. This person is bound to be a failure. And if the two of you are associated too closely, you could go down with him.

My first boss fell into this category. Immediately after I attended one of his sales meetings without a tie, he bared his teeth and chewed me out royally for my appearance. But although he enforced white-glove standards of appearance on his sales force, he somehow failed to notice that, far more importantly, all of his salesmen were losing respect for him. Less than one month after I received my dressing-down

from him, he had been fired. To the business-sharpened eye, his misplaced priorities would have foretold his failure.

Likewise, a few years back, I was named manager of a restaurant to replace a man who had just been fired. It seems that the fired manager had forgotten that the customers paid his salary. As a result, he emphasized jobs like keeping the kitchen clean over his whole reason to be, serving customers good food.

Such upside-down priorities signal a lack of judgment that inevitably brings on failure in the business world. So you're better off to steer clear of business associations with this kind of incompetent.

CHAPTER III

Tactic 2: How to Make a Slave Out of a Person

WHAT MADE YOU THINK BEING GOOD TO PEOPLE ALL THE TIME WILL EVER GET YOU WHAT YOU WANT?

SHE WALKED toward the café table where I waited anxiously. As usual, she radiated the confident good looks that made her one of the most striking blondes I had seen in all my eighteen years. But immediately I sensed something wrong. I noticed it as she sat down next to me.

My date's eye shadow made a futile effort to hide her slightly bruised left eye. This flaw in her otherwise perfect appearance caused me to ask about the bruise. And she responded by telling me all the details of a rocky love affair she was locked into with another man.

As you can imagine, her answer to my unfortunate question ruined my whole evening. And I considered the episode a curse at the time—never having cared for listening to my date recount how she just can't get over some other guy. But looking back, I realized that I was having my nose rubbed in my first priceless lesson in manipulation. And later it hit me that my rival had almost made my date into his personal slave by using manipulation.

Her account of the relationship went this way:

> "I've been dating Bill off and on for about a year, even though I know damn well he's no good for me. Just look at my eye. He even hits me sometimes when he gets mad.
>
> "Day before yesterday, I told him for the hundredth time that I was leaving him, and that it was all over. He said, 'Okay, but let me kiss you good-bye before you go.' That kiss lasted five minutes, and I wound up spending the night with him. I just can't get over him. He got mad at me the next morning and hit me. That's where this came from," she explained, gesturing toward her injured left eye.

As my date described her affair with this slugger named Bill, it was obvious that she was addicted to him. I also sensed that during that five-minute kiss, Bill had once again grabbed command of her emotions and pulled her back under his control.

After listening to her story, I doubted that she would ever muster the strength to get out of the situ-

ation. And she confirmed my doubts by admitting to me that the café we were talking in—which she had selected for our date—was, in fact, Bill's favorite watering hole and hangout. She wanted to be there. She suspected that "he might show up here with another girl, and I just wanted to see what she looks like."

I made this my last date with Bill's slave. I was young and green at the time. But still I was dry enough behind the ears to know that I didn't have a chance with her.

As an epilogue, I might add that the last time I saw Bill's sometime lover, she was planning to make a clean break. She'd finally decided that the only way to get over Bill was to resort to moving out of the state. I hope she went through with it. But if Bill drove her to the bus station and gave her one of his irresistible five-minute kisses, I would wager every penny I own that she never got on that bus.

For months after this scene I tried to figure out the source of Bill's almost mystical power over this girl. And finally, several years later, as I read about a psychological experiment with a pigeon, I came to understand his manipulation.

This might sound farfetched, but if you'll compare Bill's manipulation to the pigeon story below, I think you'll draw the same conclusion I did. At the center of this pigeon story lies one of the most powerful traits of human nature. Understanding this human trait and capitalizing on it will get you what you want out of a person.

The most important pigeon story you'll ever read

Imagine a pigeon in a cage, with a bar it can peck on to get a pellet of food that it likes very much. This pellet of food is a reward, or reinforcement, for its pecking. You would assume that the more often the pigeon received the pellet of food, the more often it would peck the bar. But importantly, this didn't turn out to be the case.

The experiment yielded these results: First, when the pigeon never got food as a reinforcement, it stopped pecking the bar altogether. No surprise. Second, when the pigeon got the food reinforcement *every time* it pecked the bar, it only pecked the bar a *moderate* number of times.

Finally, and most important, when the pigeon got the food reinforcement *intermittently* (that is, sometimes it got the food reward for pecking the bar, and sometimes it got no reward for pecking), it pecked the bar like crazy—*frantically and incessantly*. The experimenters believe that this *intermittent reinforcement* is the strongest motivator for getting the behavior they wanted from the bird.

When you compare the pigeon experiment to my experience with Bill's woman friend, you'll see a striking parallel between the two. This parallel provides us with the key to Bill's appeal. It also gives us a pretty shocking insight into human nature.

Actually our human nature more closely resembles that of animals like pigeons than we like to think. We humans can't resist intermittent reinforcement much more than the pigeon did in the experiment.

When we get reinforcement every time we see a person (that is, when they treat us well every time we interact with them), we begin to take that person for granted a little. Just as the pigeon only pecked on the bar moderately in the face of constant reinforcement, we humans only respond moderately well to a person who always treats us favorably. We begin to take him for granted.

This ingratitude instinct proved to be my undoing with Bill's woman friend. She liked me, but she knew I would always be good to her. She knew she could have me any time. Put simply, *if you treat a person well all the time, you are going to be taken for granted.* In fact, some people would say you're almost as well off to mistreat a person all the time, thus avoiding the whole relationship.

This situation points up an important facet of human behavior: people take for granted what they know they can have. This trait is important, but the final result of the pigeon experiment uncovers an even more significant part of human nature. And it's one that can make you a manipulator.

Human nature's most powerful quirk

Recall the surprisingly potent way intermittent reinforcement spurred the pigeon? When it got only sporadic reinforcement for pecking the bar, the pigeon never knew whether it could have the pellets of food or not. So the bird pecked the bar like crazy, which showed that intermittent reinforcement most powerfully goaded the pigeon's pecking.

Isn't the similarity close between the sporadic pattern that set fire under the pigeon and the tactics Bill used to control his girl? Bill used intermittent reinforcement like a master. He did it by treating this girl like a queen, his five-minute kiss being one example. Then at other times, he hit her and gave her no reinforcement. So she never knew whether she could have Bill or not.

This pattern of sporadic reinforcement kept her acting like the pigeon. She was figuratively pecking madly at the bar, desperate for any reinforcement that Bill might give her.

My date never knew exactly where she stood with Bill. Since she didn't know whether she could have this man or not, taking him for granted proved utterly impossible. This led her to *want desperately what she felt she could not have.* And exploiting this natural desire on her part gave Bill his puppetlike control over her. In this human quirk lies a shoving, bone-deep urge of human nature:

People want what they cannot have.

From this desire come many of humanity's great foibles. This trait causes people to want material possessions they can't afford. It leads men to burn themselves out pursuing women they cannot have, and it drives women to self-destruct over men they chase fruitlessly. Any person who can harness this law of human nature for his own purposes can wield an awesome influence over other people.

As Bill no doubt realized, intermittent reinforcement is the best tool for exploiting people's desire for things they can't have. When you use this tactic, you make the other person think that you're the thing he can't have. Or your business deal is the one he can't have. He can never take you for granted, because you alternate between the caress and the bite, between treating him well and treating him badly. He senses that he can't have you, and his instincts make him want you, sometimes almost desperately.

This vulnerability to intermittent reinforcement explains my date's situation, which looks ridiculous on the surface—a beautiful girl scrambling after a man who beat her, when she could have her pick of men.

Of course Bill had probably never heard of the pigeon experiment. And I doubt that the term "intermittent reinforcement" would have meant any more to him than "amortizing his ishial tuborosities." Rather, I assume that his technique emerged from years of trial-and-error in his love life. That's how most people learn it. If you asked Bill how this tactic works, he would likely reply, "Well, I treat women real nice most of the time. But if you want to control them, you've got to be mean sometimes to keep 'em on their toes."

Before I go any further, I want to insert here that I don't condone beating women—never having hit an adult in my entire life. Certainly there are many other ways to withdraw reinforcement. Also, con-

sidering the inroads the women's movement has made, I believe such a neo-Nazi tactic would prove counterproductive today.

Since I act only as a reporter, debating the morality of intermittent reinforcement lies outside the boundaries of my calling. I only report what works, not what is moral or immoral.

Finally, don't assume that just because this case dealt with a woman falling victim to intermittent reinforcement, that only men can use it. In fact, I've watched many more males fall for women who are using this tactic than vice versa.

Intermittent reinforcement applies to your love life.

If you survey your past love life a moment, you probably can recall instances where you've been taken in by intermittent reinforcement yourself. Surely at some time in your life, there has been a certain person you just couldn't get over. You felt a magnetic attraction to him or her that bordered on addiction.

Sometimes he or she charmed you into walking on air, but at other times you were maddeningly ignored or treated coolly. Possessed, you jumped between the highest highs and the lowest lows, feeling the whole time the awkward sensation of never knowing where you stood. You couldn't shake her, or get off the emotional roller coaster.

I'm sure you've endured this kind of tiger's-back love affair before. I know several women have affected me this way. These women were practicing in-

termittent reinforcement on me on purpose or by accident. I was so attracted to them that my human nature bulldozed my common sense. And I did everything in my power to please them.

Notice that "I did everything in my power to please them." This statement describes what you can siphon out of a person by using intermittent reinforcement the right way.

Specific tactics in intermittent reinforcement

To apply intermittent reinforcement, you follow two clear-cut steps that take advantage of the fact that human beings want what they can't have. First, you set up a pattern of reinforcement by giving your manipulatee something he wants. Second, withdraw it, and watch the person come under your control as he struggles to have the reinforcement restored.

This technique sounds simple. And it is easy to understand, but it's hard to carry out. It's difficult to make it work, because you have to first be able to *reinforce* the person you want to manipulate. (That is, you must provide something he wants.)

You give this reinforcement by charming the person, paying him money, or furnishing him something else he wants badly. But unless you can give your manipulatee something he really wants, he won't care a whit if you withdraw his "reinforcement" by acting coolly toward him, refusing to pay him, or whatever.

In fact, you probably don't even reinforce most of the people you know, so trying intermittent reinforcement on these persons would be a waste. The

people you can manipulate with this technique are therefore limited to those you reinforce. But by concentrating your efforts on these people, you can almost lead them like children.

At least seventy to ninety percent of the time you have to be good to the person you plan to manipulate, and give him something he wants. You may do this by whatever method you choose.

In choosing the correct reinforcement, you'll need to figure out what would thrill this person the most. Try to put yourself in his place, and ask yourself what would boost your manipulatee's ego. What does he really like? In a business situation you may select praise, money, or some other reward.

Assuming you have completed step one, you should be giving the subject of your manipulation what he wants. But don't get carried away with the reinforcement. The first thing you know, your manipulatee will take you for granted, and then you won't be able to wrench the time of day out of him.

Keep him on his toes. The moment you detect the slightest hint that your "pigeon" is taking you for granted, withdraw his reinforcement on the spot. When you feel taken for granted, you know that you provided what he wanted too constantly, and that the time has long since passed to withdraw it.

Applications in your love life

To illustrate, let's apply intermittent reinforcement to your love life. Assume that over a period of several days you're trying to charm a woman, and acting as

friendly as possible toward her. She seems to be responding well to your overtures. But sometimes you feel like she pays less than rapt attention to what you say.

Immediately you know the time has come to back off, and be a little cool and uninterested. Ignore her for a while. But don't act like a hurt child, and look foolish in the process. Instead indicate through your behavior that you can more or less take her or leave her. If possible, subtly make her jealous by talking to other women in front of her.

Remember, people want what they can't have. Now she may begin to doubt that she can have you. Your independence and confidence are attractive. You're saying in effect, "I want you, but I can always have other women if you're not interested. Take it or leave it." Now she doesn't know exactly where she stands with you. If you charmed her to begin with (if you reinforced her), you can bet that she'll be chasing you in no time. Her human nature will surge, and she'll begin to want what she can't have—you. Intermittent reinforcement has put her under your control to some extent. Soon you should have her working madly for the kind of reinforcement she has come to enjoy.

After you withdraw the reinforcement, usually wait for her to make the next move toward you. If she doesn't come after you, then you probably weren't reinforcing her to begin with. (Or she's pathologically shy, which is highly unlikely.) Better concentrate on someone else and come back to her

after some time has passed. As a last resort when your intermittent reinforcement fails, read Chapter XIV, "If All Else Fails, Try the Dirty Way." This chapter reports a backup alternative that remains after your abortive manipulation fizzles.

Understanding intermittent reinforcement takes a great deal of the mystery, and romance, out of the "helplessly loving in vain" syndrome that we've all seen. But any measure of mystery that this knowledge subtracts it repays by giving you a more firm control of your own love life. What you get out of a love affair is left less to the whims of fate, which can often be cruel to you. Instead you can take what you want by allying yourself with one of the powerful quirks of human behavior.

While you'll find the most use for this technique in your private life, don't overlook the opportunities to use it in your business dealings. For instance, if you're a manager, don't worry about chewing out a good employee. Being rough on him sometimes will probably make him work better for you.

Intermittent reinforcement, like any tactic that works in your love life, can also be adapted to a business setting by a clever mind.

CHAPTER IV

Tactic 3: The World Is Rife with Favoritism

HOW TO PUT IT TO WORK FOR YOU

YOU LIVE in an unfair world. You'll confront favoritism at every turn in the business jungle and elsewhere. In fact, when asked by a survey what factor they considered most responsible for their success, a group of top young executives most frequently mentioned "getting in good with the boss." Not hard work, efficiency, or superior performance—but crass favoritism.

However, the manipulator doesn't sit and bemoan the situation. Instead he accepts reality and calculates a way to turn the situation to his advantage. He knows he has to cultivate friendship with the people who control his career or find himself stagnated. And unless he puts favoritism to work for himself, it automatically works against him, because his rivals will use it to undercut him.

Incidentally you'll notice that I use "friendship" and "favoritism" interchangeably. And if you think about it, so do most people. You probably do too. For example, when your boss does a favor for you because he likes you, he did it out of "friendship." But when someone he likes better than you gets rewards from the boss, it's out and out "favoritism"! It all depends on who gets the short end of the deal. Right? He helped you because he was your "friend." But he helped the other guy because your rival "buttered him up."

The tendency to help our friends—or to be swayed by favoritism, if you prefer—is firmly rooted in our human nature. And you're only jousting with windmills if you try to fight this situation. Nothing you can do will change anything because favoritism runs so strong and deep in human behavior.

Even the most hard-nosed businessmen make many decisions based on favoritism. Take, for instance, the most brilliant businessman I have ever known. He made himself a millionaire by peddling used cars from a lot in the slums. And he wound up owning the largest auto dealership in the world for one of Detroit's Big Three. Next, he formed a holding company that controlled a string of car dealers, plus insurance and finance companies.

While I worked for him, I watched even this hard-bitten, profit-conscious businessman swayed by favoritism many times. For example, he employed an advertising agency owned by one of his friends. He

also bought his supplies from an industrial salesman who had dated his daughter, to mention only a couple of incidents.

Because of its pervasiveness, exploiting this human trait is one of your best tactics for moving ahead in the business jungle. If all other factors look anywhere near equal, the person who capitalizes on favoritism will get the nod for promotions, patronage, pay hikes, or whatever he seeks. And you can be that person if you harness the power of friendship for your own ends. By doing this, you let human nature do much of your work for you.

Of course, you can use favoritism in settings other than those of a business context. The power of this trait in your love life surely strikes you as obvious. Nearly all romantic closeness, favors, and loyalties are given on the basis of friendship. In fact, you may use the tactics of this chapter more in your love life than in any other area.

I discuss three techniques in this chapter that put favoritism and human nature on your side. I know all three work because I've seen other people use them, and I have used them myself.

The world's oldest piece of advice finally made practical

Smile! It's the world's most time-worn piece of advice. It's been dished up by every would-be sage from the overbearing mothers of blushing prom-queen hopefuls to Ann Landers to the misguided

researchers who found that it takes fewer facial muscles to smile than it does to frown. (It still seems easier to me to frown than it does to smile.)

Only with the greatest reluctance do I warm the advice up one more time and serve it myself. And I do it only for two good reasons, both highly Machiavellian. First, smiling works. Second, I want to make this mindless bit of advice practical for a change.

In addressing the first point, I don't have any pointed anecdote or gut-wrenching emotional episode that would drive the power of the smile home to you. My experiences and yours run along the same lines as far as this subject is concerned. So I'll ask you to prove to yourself the magnetism of the smile.

Name the three people you know who seem to be, for the want of a better term, the "most popular." I refer to the people you know that both women and men seem to take an instant liking to on their first meeting, and who seem to get what they want from people more times than not. Stop a moment and think about the people you know. Then mentally write the three names here:

1
2
3

I believe you'll find, just like I did, that all three people you named employ the smile to their advantage very effectively. These people realize that smiling does make a sweeping difference in how often a

person gets what he wants. In fact, it's surely the best tool in a person's arsenal for making people like him—which makes favoritism work for him.

However, I certainly don't issue the blanket proclamation "Smile!" as so many unthinking hacks before me have done. Despite the power of this tactic, you and I both know many people who smile constantly but can barely manipulate the time of day out of any woman or man. As is the case with most powerful devices, the misuse of the smiling tactic sabotages its user more times than it helps him.

I'm specifically referring to the kind of person who nearly always brandishes a forced smile, even at inappropriate moments—which leaves the definite impression that he must be either a little goofy or up to something. This person is a casualty of the mindless decree to "Smile."

If smiling transforms one person into a slick manipulator, yet it makes another person contemptible, where does the difference between the two lie? I believe the difference is in the *way* these people smile.

In trying to make the unalloyed smiling tactic practical and workable, I experimented with several different ways of smiling. I tried out each method on strangers whom I introduced myself to in airports, bars, offices, and other places. I tested the following: never smiling, smiling constantly, smiling after I said something I thought warranted a smile, and smiling during and after I said something that warranted a smile. I think this fairly well covers all the ways people smile.

When I tried them out, each of these methods of smiling produced dramatically different results. This explains why the tactic works against you unless you use it right.

When I never smiled, people behaved rather coolly and spoke to me only in a perfunctory manner. I was treated basically as though I were a piece of furniture, which is probably what my behavior reminded people of.

When I smiled constantly, the people I met began to condescend to me almost immediately. They forced a strained smile when I said something amusing, as if to humor me. I'm certain that these people left the encounter thinking they had met some bumpkin who was slightly touched.

During the tests in which I smiled after I said something I thought warranted a smile, I harvested a bumper crop of suspicious glances. I believe people thought I was a sarcastic smartass, or that I was a charlatan with something up my sleeve. In any case, the response I received to the delayed smile can only be termed negative.

Finally I stumbled on the perfect application when I smiled *during and after* I said something that merited a smile. I immediately knew I'd struck gold by the warm reception I got from men, and the open flirtations that this tactic teased from women. This kind of sustained smile is resistance-shattering. It makes you emerge magnetic.

The key is to begin smiling the moment you inhale to say something that calls for a smile. Then, look the

person in the eyes and sustain your smile *during and after* you say it. You'll be taken back by the way this technique improves, many times over, the reception people give the things you say. They even laugh more at your witty remarks when they're served up this way.

This during-and-after smile pattern gives you a more endearing style—which takes its toll on a person's resistance to you. The words you say seem to be coming from someone who has his interest at heart. So you're opening him up to doing things your way.

Other tactics that employ favoritism to your advantage

Do you like flattery? If you think like most people, you would probably reply "No!" But like nearly everybody, the truth is probably "Yes."

Actually everyone loves to be flattered, but they dislike obvious flattery. Blatant flattery smacks of dishonesty and betrays its user's ulterior motives. But when flattery is executed with a shrewd subtlety, it touches the heart of your manipulatee and stirs his human nature. You swing a person to your side when you flatter his judgment without letting him know you're doing it. The tactics in the rest of this chapter will show you how to reap the benefits of favoritism by using this kind of calculated, clever flattery.

Tell your manipulatee how something he said has helped you.

When was the last time anyone took your advice? It almost never happens. Right? Of course not. People hate to take advice because they foolishly think this means that they can't work out their own problems.

But just imagine for a moment that the unheard-of happened, and someone told you that your advice had helped him solve a problem. After you recovered from the shock, you'd swell with pride. By golly, someone finally figured out that you're as smart as a whip—something you knew all along. This person finally realized that you possess razor-sharp judgment and a biting insight—the kind that can solve even the most tangled problems.

Of course I'm exaggerating. But you can see what a compliment it is when a person confides that you solved a problem for him. In effect, he's saying, "You're smarter than I am." It praises your judgment in a way that seems totally honest and impossible to fake. A person can't fabricate this kind of ultimate compliment, so it would never be suspected of being flattery.

Now that you've vicariously felt the ego boost you get from this subtle but profound compliment, turn things around and use it to befriend your manipulatee. Ask him for some advice, and let him know if it works out for you.

If you have a sharp mind, you'll devise endless variations of this technique. You might seek out your

manipulatee's counsel on good movies, books, records, work habits, etc. Then try to cultivate a taste for whatever he suggests, and tell him his recommendations were very good, if you like them. Your friendship will strengthen as you flatter his self-esteem by mutual tastes and pleasures. Then sit back and watch favoritism work for you.

Ask your manipulatee how he got into his business or career. Then listen.

As a student I made my way through graduate school by peddling advertising space for a classical radio station that had only a tiny listening audience—a difficult selling job to say the least. One of my accounts, a thriving record store, was owned by an unusual businessman I'll call Steve. Steve's hair fell to the middle of his T-shirted back. And in his tennis shoes and jeans, he looked no older than twenty-five—which isn't exactly the mental picture most people would draw of a successful businessman.

However, Steve had founded his own flourishing record store in an extremely competitive market dominated by the big chain stores. His success came after several years of juggling debts with precious little capital, and sleeping on a cot in his store because he couldn't afford an apartment. But his years of struggle have paid off. He runs his own show now. And he can afford plenty of the vacations in Mexico he loves so much. After all, the store rocks along smoothly without his constant supervision.

When I took over my position as advertising man-

ager, Steve's record store had almost stopped advertising with my station altogether. So I was told to persuade him to take out another advertisement with us. As I approached his store, I didn't really anticipate any success with the man, and I was scared.

When I walked into his office, I was surprised by his long hair and unorthodox appearance, never having met him before. Out of natural curiosity I asked, "How did you wind up owning a record store?" For some reason, that question seemed to tickle an erogenous zone in his heart. For a full hour he detailed his years of sacrifice that led to his current prosperity. And his justifiable pride showed as he related his story.

Mostly as a result of my lucky question about how he got into his career, he treated me to lunch and signed a year-long advertising contract with our station. In addition he agreed to provide the station free albums from his classical record department to play on the air.

I didn't realize it at the time, but the power of favoritism, not my scant sales ability, accomplished all this for me. Steve liked me immediately because I flattered him by taking an interest in his work. His human nature put him more and more on my side as I devoted ninety percent of the conversation to his career. And after I'd made a friend of Steve, favoritism made him easy to persuade.

Any time you meet someone for the first time, ask them what they do for a living and how they got into that career. This question quickly warms them

up to you, because no matter how much they dislike their jobs, people love to talk about how they got there. It thrills a person to see that you seem interested in a subject so close to his heart. This line of conversation always begins the relationship by putting favoritism solidly on your side.

CHAPTER V

Tactic 4: The Essence of Manipulation

"I DON'T NEED YOU. YOU NEED ME."

HARDY BLEW INTO Houston, Texas, chasing the easy money that flooded the town during the 1973 oil boom. Being the ultimate con artist, he had never sustained a full month of work in his life. All of his jobs were punctuated with periods of drunkenness when he failed to show up. Needless to say, Hardy's working habits didn't lend themselves to a great deal of job security. And as a result he'd bounced around and sold just about everything: stock, land, cars, and various and sundry items house-to-house.

Intemperance more often saps geniuses than it does lesser lights, and I believe this was Hardy's problem. After all, he could only be called a genius as a manipulator. Many times I've seen him work one week at a selling job and make more than any of his fellow workers earned in a month.

For instance, during the last full week I saw him put in, he made almost $2,000 in commissions before getting fired for hitting the bottle. Sober, he could manipulate the meanest man into following him around like a puppy in a matter of minutes.

Only a few days after we met, I invited him to share my apartment, because we could fill each other's needs. He needed a place to crash when he was drunk, and I needed someone to teach me the art of manipulation.

During the months we lived together, he taught me more about handling people than I had learned in all my previous years combined. And despite the fact that he took me for a few hundred dollars, I would still say that Hardy pretty closely embodies the "con man with a heart of gold" idea. The knowledge he patiently imparted to me has proven of far greater value than the amount he cost me.

The last time I saw my friend, he was trying to con a rich woman into marrying him. He got drunk and disappeared shortly after that, and I haven't heard from him since. But the tactics he taught stayed with me and serve as the mainstay of this book.

The "I don't need you" state of mind

The most essential of the tactics he taught me amounts to a state of mind that largely determines the success or failure of a manipulator. The entire time you engage a person in manipulation, you must subtly convey the idea that "I don't need you; you

need me." This is the essence of handling people. You tilt the bargaining table your way the minute you let the other person get wind of your independent attitude.

This tactic applies to your love life as surely as it does to your business activities. For instance, I've already mentioned that Hardy used the "I don't need you" ruse on women. And he applied it so smoothly that he confidently paid for a motel room before he entered a bar to pick up women. It never occurred to him that he might strike out. And to the best of my knowledge, he almost never did. I doubt that any of the money he paid in advance for a room was ever wasted.

Women, however, should bear in mind that this tactic works both ways. And many a woman has also manipulated men by adopting the "I don't need you; you need me" stance.

Hardy described the tactic this way: "The person with the upper hand in any situation is the one who can afford to walk away from the deal if it's not to his liking, or the one who can make the other person think he can walk away. Make him think that you don't need him, but that he needs you. The man who can't do this won't get what he wants out of a deal."

A very good psychological reason exists for the power of this tactic. Being human, we act very stubborn when we sense that someone needs something from us. This instinct is etched into every person's psyche. If your manipulatee senses that you *need* him

to do things your way, his marrow-deep instincts scream, "Don't do it!" He sets his mental brakes, and almost nothing short of ramming him with a Greyhound bus can move him from his obstinate position.

But if you can make him believe that you don't need him to do things your way nearly as badly as *he needs* it, you've put his human nature on your side. Now he thinks he wants what you're proposing. So his instincts prick his ears up and make him receptive to your ideas. By exploiting this human weakness, you can control him nearly like a puppet.

Remember, never give the slightest hint of desperation; instead, radiate confidence and independence. Show your antagonist how he needs what you propose, and indicate that it makes little difference to you which way he decides. Subtly convey that if his terms aren't to your liking, you can simply walk away from the deal—even when this isn't really the case. If you smooth-talk him into this state of mind, he'll usually want to do things your way as much as you do.

How this tactic applies to your love life

> "Women may not whistle the tune as often, but they need the sheet music almost as bad as men do. They're just smarter than men about gettin' it." (Hardy)

I've heard Hardy say many times that women carry on the biggest con game of them all in the bedroom. "Hell, they keep men pawing all over 'em by

pretending they don't need sex. They make men want it by acting like they don't. It's all a slick con."

Close examination of women's sexual behavior does indicate that women often use the "I don't need you" tactic. They most naturally fall into the "I don't need you" sexual pattern because of a don't-even-think-about-it sexual upbringing, coupled with a fear of being hurt. This leads most women to discourage men's first advances. As a result, they unknowingly mimic the "I don't need you" technique with devastating effects, simply by spurning men's overtures.

When a woman turns down a man's sexual advances, it usually ignites his human nature because it implies, "I don't need you." He begins to crave what he thinks he can't have. (Remember, "People want what they cannot have" is the strongest law of human nature.) By simply following these natural sexual patterns, women can make men into drooling puppets.

Turning the tables

The shrewd man, after sizing up this situation, turns the tables and exploits human nature himself, instead of playing the dupe. He discards the customary male predator role that undercuts most men. This aggressive stalking gives away the man's need. And human nature decrees that the moment a woman senses that someone needs her sexually, she usually screeches on her mental brakes. As long as

the male's pursuit betrays his need, women play coy—dispensing their favors sparingly.

But when the tables are turned via the manipulation of her human nature, the woman can be led to assume the predator role. If they're handled right, women will become the aggressors. After all, they do feel the sex drive almost as strongly as men do.

And in addition to this need for sex, American society implants in women a strong need to have their sexual attractiveness affirmed. Men provide this vote of confidence by chasing them constantly.

Once a man begins to act uninterested in sex with a woman, he tells her subtly, "I don't need you." At first this only sparks a woman's curiosity because few men on the prowl behave this way. But her mild consternation quickly turns to panic if his cool sexual behavior continues.

Suddenly her human nature is touched off. Now she thinks he doesn't need her. So instinct makes her itch for what she feels she can't have. She begins to doubt her own sexual attractiveness. With her human nature stirred up, she jumps into the sexual-stalker role.

By feigning a lack of concern for sex with a woman at the start of the relationship, a man immediately tilts the balance of power in his favor. With her instincts aroused, she'll make the opening moves to satisfy her sex need and to affirm her attractiveness. So by tampering with human nature, the man restructures the typical man-woman relationship. He places

the need in the woman's corner. Now, to a large extent, the man can dispense his favors at will.

However, when the subject is switched from sex to marriage, women often backslide from the shrewd manhandlers to the dupes, while men naturally emerge as the manipulators. Why? Women usually feel the strongest need for marriage because of social pressure from parents, relatives, and friends. On the other hand, many men see it as a restriction of their freedom.

Because they usually want to get married more than men, women openly demonstrate their need. And sensing this need, a man's human nature throws on the mental brakes.

But when a woman plays her hand cleverly, she completely turns things around. By using the "I don't need you" technique and indicating that "I'd still like to play around awhile," she stirs his human instincts. Now he's beginning to think she doesn't need marriage, and he wonders where he stands with her. Suddenly he's insisting that "I believe it's time to settle down and marry." She then concedes "reluctantly."

How this tactic applies to business dealings

While Hardy sold west Texas land for a fly-by-night real estate corporation, he showed me a trick that uses "I don't need you" in a business setting. He was peddling land to people who answered a newspa-

per ad that promised "Beautiful West Texas Land Dirt Cheap!"

I knew he was working for a respectable, rock-solid firm because its world headquarters was a mobile home situated in a gravel parking lot off a Houston freeway. And they paid their salesmen's commissions in cash on the spot, which is why Hardy hired on there.

The company brochure pictured wooded Texas meadows washed by clear streams. But the actual plots probably resembled the moon's landscape closer than they did the lush, green photos in the pamphlets.

This was Hardy's ploy: He told his prospects that if he sold fifteen lots that month, the management was sending him on a trip to Acapulco. (He fabricated the whole thing, of course.) Next, he hung up a chart in his trailer office with fifteen circles on it, and he would write a person's name in a circle if that person bought a lot from him. This made the customers think they could help him get to Acapulco.

Now here comes the shrewd twist. As soon as he put the chart up, he wrote a made-up name in every circle. Then he wrote in big letters, "I won my trip to Acapulco!" Get the idea?

As a background let me describe Hardy's financial condition at the time he pulled this one. He had blown all his money during the two-week drunk he'd just come off. And he even had to resort to wiring his mother back in Alabama for enough money to eat.

But no customer would ever get the idea how desperately he needed a commission from selling a lot.

Instead he told them confidently, "I don't need to sell you any land; I sell plenty of land. Look, I just won a trip. You're the one that needs the land. It's beautiful land just like you want, and you need to buy it before it goes any higher." So he shifted the need to his customers' corner.

His ploy worked. Using it Hardy sold more lots the first week he worked there than all the rest of the salesmen put together. Putting himself back in the chips once more, he made $2,150 in six days on the job.

Hardy knew that if he had put lots up on his chart as he sold them, customers would sense that he needed a sale badly to win his trip. Suspecting his desperation, every customer would have balked and haggled him to death before giving him the sale he needed.

I also watched Hardy use the "I don't need you" tactic to outwit a customer in another clever manipulation. He had just sold a woman a piece of land. But no sooner had the woman walked out the door than the sales manager told my friend that another salesman had already sold the lot thirty minutes before. Hardy would have to switch the woman to another lot or lose the commission from the sale. And he knew this wouldn't be easy. After all, the woman had picked that particular lot out because it bordered on a creek that ran through the development.

Most people would have called the woman on the phone and apologized for selling her sold land. Then she would know Hardy needed her to switch to another lot. Her human nature, seizing upon his obvious need, would have decreed, "No! Get me the land I picked or nothing."

Instead Hardy called her and said, "You need to come down to the office. I've got something to tell you." When she got there, he told her, "My boss tells me you're gonna have trouble building your house on that piece of land you bought."

"Really?" the woman tensed.

"Yep. The county won't let you put a bathroom in that close to the creek. You might contaminate it."

"Oh, no. You're kidding," she said, looking sick to the heart.

(Notice the way Hardy shoved the need to the woman's side rather than on his, where it belonged. I can't agree with his ethics—I couldn't bring myself to lie this way. But this gives you an idea of how it works. Obviously the woman believed that she needed Hardy now. She thought she was stuck with the land she'd "bought," but couldn't do anything with it. So Hardy had opened her up to his final thrust.)

"Now I've got another lot that's almost like yours, and it's pretty close to the creek. But it's far enough away that they'll let you build a house with a bathroom," he proposed.

"I want that one," she insisted.

"We can probably switch it for you. It may be sold

though; so don't get your hopes up yet," he cautioned, to set her up. (He knew it wasn't sold.) "But it'll cost you a little more, since it's a little nicer land," he delivered his fell stroke.

As a result of his manipulation, Hardy easily switched the woman to the other lot. Although he told her the new land was "nicer" and charged her $300 more for it, it was actually the same size. (And probably looked exactly like hers, give or take a few tumbleweed that blew across it.)

By the time he hiked the price on her and clinched the deal, Hardy had raised his commission from $200 to $275. But she paid the extra money because she thought she needed the other land, and that Hardy was only trying to help her get it.

This deal may seem penny ante, and it is, but the human principles in this situation work the same as those in a deal worth thousands of dollars. If you can manipulate people on the small deals, you can swing the big ones too. Human nature doesn't change just because the numbers do. People are still people, and they basically kick and claw the same way for a buck regardless of the size of the stakes.

Certainly the dollar amount was paltry on these bogus land deals. But $2,150 worth of them a week kept Hardy eating filet mignon for lunch and lamb with mint jelly for supper—all of which isn't bad for a country-boy drunk who couldn't even read a phone book.

Hardy's use of the "I don't need you" tactic in a business setting should give you some idea of its po-

tential. You can use your creativity to discover how this tactic will help you manipulate people in your business. If you'll think about it, you can devise ways to convey to the people you deal with the notion that they need you, rather than vice versa. Then use their state of mind to your own advantage.

Keep your nut small so you'll be able to use this tactic.

Business people refer to a "nut" as the overhead a business must pay every month to survive. On an individual basis your nut consists of all the payments you must make each month to stay afloat financially. This includes your rent or house payments, car note, insurance, and other fixed payments.

It may surprise you to learn that the size of your nut can determine your success or failure in many bargaining situations—for instance, in getting what you want from your boss. (Or if you're self-employed, your success or failure in negotiating with your clients.) The problem with a large nut is that it hangs a millstone around your neck as you bargain.

If you're strapped by large expenses, using the "I don't need you" technique becomes very difficult. You can't afford to walk away from a deal that doesn't suit you, because you crave a steady flow of cash to make all your payments. All your car notes, rent, furniture notes, and so forth hover in the back of your mind as you negotiate. So you probably can't muster the nerve to convince the other guy that he has to meet your terms.

Remember—the person who can afford to walk away from a deal he doesn't like will generally get his way in any bargaining. So a small nut confers great manipulative advantages on you. You can afford a period of little or no income if you don't get this deal, and your manner will convey that fact to the other party.

Consider how the size of your nut undercuts your ability to extract what you want from your boss. If you're deluged with monthly payments for your cars, stereo, and house, you can't very well quit your job if your boss won't meet your terms. You've got to have a steady paycheck, so you can't afford a period of unemployment spent looking for another job. As a result, your large nut almost enslaves you to your boss. You pretty much have to take whatever you're given.

Bargaining with a big nut amounts to negotiating with your back to the wall. You know you've got huge expenses to meet. And your demeanor usually betrays your desperation enough for the other party to sense it too. With such minuscule leverage, you'll be lucky to walk away from the situation with the shirt on your back.

Silence says, "I don't need you."

I'm sure you've endured the experience of talking to a person who gets the idea that he doesn't need you, but that you need him. He condescends to you by not responding to what you say. He even acts like he's not listening.

But there's a simple remedy for this smugness that can quickly restore your rightful place in the conversation. The moment you detect this kind of condescension, ask the other party a question, then shut up. Don't say another word until he responds to your question, even if a ten-minute silence ensues.

Silence is the strongest pressure to answer that you can apply. By silently insisting that he respond to your query, you're implying, "I don't need you near enough to put up with any of your rudeness." I've used this ploy many times, and it's never failed to restore the other person's respect for my place in the conversation.

Although on paper this tactic might look like it would anger the other guy, it doesn't. My experience has shown me that this silent treatment makes the other person pay attention to what you say and respond to it, without making him mad.

The risk you take

When you use the "I don't need you" technique in any setting, you're taking a calculated risk. The risk is that as you try to manipulate some people, this tactic will actually work against you. These are the people who award their favors, money, or friendship to people they think need their help.

I would estimate that no more than five to ten percent of the public operates this way. But if you apply this tactic in your manipulation of these people, you may lose out simply because they think you don't need their patronage. As a result, your disclaimer of

need becomes a calculated risk. But remember that only five to ten percent of the public operates in this manner. So the odds are stacked ninety to ninety-five percent in your favor every time you use this method—not exactly a riverboat-gambler risk.

Bear in mind that the overwhelming majority still blindly follows its human nature. They believe that "if you don't need me, you must have something going for you."

You'll see this vast majority standing in long, shoving lines leading to a popular restaurant. They reason, in lemming fashion, that a restaurant that doesn't need their business must be a better place to eat than one that does need it. Among this majority, you'll discover that "I don't need you" works like sorcery.

You can use this tactic in any persuasion—from getting a job, and a raise after you get it, to manipulating the people in your love life. Also, understanding the technique should make you wary of being manipulated by others who try to use it on you. You may be surprised to discover that, despite their smug facade, these people really do need you—if you're sharp enough to call their bluff.

CHAPTER VI

Tactic 5: And the Meek Shall Manipulate the Earth

NEVER KNOW MUCH, AND YOU'LL GET FURTHER.

> "The smartest people you'll ever meet are the ones that don't act like they know much. It's a dead giveaway that you're dealing with a dumbass when a guy thinks he knows everything."

THIS BIT OF WISDOM was handed me by a black man who had been outsmarting whites for years, and making a great deal of money at it. He'd successfully hawked vacuum cleaners house-to-house, cars, and restaurant equipment. And he made the kind of living that enabled him to buy his clothes from the same stores the Texas millionaires did.

So I found it interesting when he advised me that

"it's a whole lot easier to outsharp a man that thinks he knows a lot. You can always take a wise guy for more money."

This advice was eye-opening since it came from a man who had manipulated a large cross-section of people over a period of many years. But I didn't really decide to adopt meekness until several impressive people gave me the same advice. I still thought, at this point, that I knew just about all I needed to know.

> "Don't ever get too smart to learn something. I wasn't exactly born yesterday, but I still learn something new every day."

I heard this from a man who surely deserves the title of the businessman's businessman if anyone does. He is the millionaire I mentioned in Chapter IV who started out in the ghetto and wound up making a fortune in autos, finance, and insurance. I worked in his management training program when I was in my early twenties. When he gave advice, I listened, and not only because he was my boss.

My college degree was still warm at the time he told me this. And just like all new graduates I felt superior and brimming over with knowledge. But when a man who had amassed millions confided that he still had a lot to learn, I began to wonder whether I, who had yet to earn my first penny in a full-time job, should act like I knew everything.

"How long did it take you to learn to fix cars?" I queried the veteran mechanic, who was working on my car.

"I don't know how long it'll take. I'm still learning," he replied.

This exchange took place with a master mechanic, who could literally tear a car apart and put it back together again. Because of his mechanical savvy, he usually milked at least 500,000 miles out of his own cars before he junked them. Yet he was telling me that he was still learning to repair cars, after thirty-three years of working as a mechanic. If this man is still learning mechanics, then I doubt that anybody knows the field yet.

The cumulative impact of these episodes finally routed my know-it-all attitude away. And I decided to become meek. I realized that "There is no greater fool than he who thinks himself wise; no one wiser than he who suspects he is a fool." (De Valois, French thinker)

You seldom find know-it-all arrogance among truly successful people. A person who worked hard to achieve his wealth and prestige doesn't prop up the airs of smugness. Instead you'll get the arrogance from his wife or, most likely, from his children—who probably never contributed anything to the fortune he earned, except to drive his Cadillacs and spend his money.

The advantages of meekness

A meek posture helps you dodge the very real pitfalls of acting like you know too much. Think for a moment what happens when you lead people to think you know a lot. Whether you succeed or fail, raising people's expectations this way will always work against you. If you fail, you'll be taunted for not living up to what you said you could do. If, on the other hand, you succeed, people will resent it. So obviously, claiming to know a lot can't work to your advantage either way.

Besides, a know-it-all posture also undercuts your attempts at manipulation in a very fundamental way: It makes people suspect that you're clever enough to use them and, indeed, *are* trying to manipulate them at that very moment. But successful manipulation depends on stealth, on your manipulatee's never knowing that you're handling him. He should never see or feel the hook going in. But when you let on that you know a lot, you're brandishing that shiny hook right in his face. Anyone but a fool would smell something fishy, and refuse to be manipulated.

In manipulation you'll find the ability to play ignorant to be one of your chief assets. Hardly anyone suspects that he's being manipulated by a greenhorn who's still wet behind the ears. They even willingly reveal information that helps you manipulate them, because they doubt that you would know how to use it to their disadvantage anyway.

Hardy used this "playing dumb" ruse in his manipulations. He was an accomplished salesman if

there ever was one. But he still told his customers that he was new in the business. And he often turned their resulting lack of suspicion to his advantage.

You'll stumble onto another benefit when you act like you don't know much. It makes people want to help you. People like a person who seems to know less than they do. And as a result, they'll help him succeed.

But most importantly, a meek stance of "I don't know much" helps assure that you will, in fact, make it. This attitude makes you receptive to better ways of doing things. Only a person with a meek, open mind will sharpen his skills and upgrade his techniques by siphoning off the ideas of others. Meekness opens you up to different ideas. So it helps you sidestep the most dangerous quicksand that can threaten your powers of reasoning: thinking you already know everything you need to know.

Be meek and eat more crow. It costs far less per serving than discord does.

Discord costs you money. The price tag on disagreements, arguments, and hard feelings can skyrocket so quickly that it makes the cost of feeding a drug habit look pretty reasonable in comparison.

If you don't believe it, just talk to some divorced men about their $400-a-month child support payments. They'll tell you how discord keeps them in hock. And what is child support but a monthly installment a person owes because he couldn't get along with someone? (I'm quite familiar with this situation,

because every con man I ever met was divorced. But they don't make their child support payments anyway.)

Besides taxing you at home, disharmony costs you at work. Any enemy you make at work will do his best to sabotage your career every chance he gets.

You'll need help sooner or later from nearly every person you work with. But even at a critical time, you won't get any assistance from an enemy who's still nursing a grudge and waiting for just such an opportunity to exact his revenge. In the long run this conflict can only hit you in the pocketbook by hurting your performance. And on some occasions a hostile opinion may even torpedo your promotion or raise.

But conflict probably ravages your emotions more than it does your finances. Hard words leave you bitter and unhappy so much of the time that even if they didn't hurt you financially you'd be hard put to enjoy your money. After all, brooding over your strained relationships saps you and keeps you emotionally drained. Face it—when you're fighting with someone, mustering any peace of mind is next to impossible. (Not to mention the fact that you may soon find your health affected, as the stress grinds you physically.)

Considering the bitter fruits and high cost of discord, eating crow starts to look a lot more palatable than making an enemy. And the guts to say, "I'm wrong. You're right," or to squelch your instinct to retaliate with eye-for-an-eye harsh words, can save

you from having to pay the high price that disagreements cost.

You'll dodge at least half of your potential personal problems by eating crow. But there's more. Every time you eat crow, you should also count it a deposit in your bank account. Staying on good terms will save you money down the line.

How do you handle cutting remarks?

At work you're struggling with a heavy box of papers, carrying them toward your office. Meanwhile a man you've never gotten along with at work is walking down the narrow hall toward you.

As you pass him, the box slips from your grasp a little. And before you can regain your hold, the corner of it heavily grazes your co-worker's arm. You suddenly feel very uneasy. You don't know whether the bump hurt him. But you hope not, because it was an accident. Maybe he won't take it the wrong way, even though you've had some friction with him before. To compensate, you humble yourself, "Listen, I'm so sorry. Excuse me. I . . ."

"You don't have to be such a bastard," he says. He cuts you off and resents you.

What will you say back after he's stung you just when you were apologizing? His rudeness has set your temper on fire. And you feel the angry tightening in your chest and throat. (Incidentally this is an actual situation that I've been in.) How will you reply?

Let's say you decide to retaliate—just what your

instincts are screaming for. Then more than likely you, like most people, aren't clever enough to bother him much with any insulting crack you might throw together on the spur of the moment. You'll probably just blurt out something that sounds half-baked and makes you look foolish.

And even if you do succeed in firing off a stinging rebuttal, you'll reap a more bitter, hollow victory than if you had shot back something foolish. Your victory will be your undoing sooner or later, because you've sired a hurt, revenge-minded enemy—a constant thorn for your side. Your cutting remark signaled the start of the hostilities that will eat at you emotionally, and will probably hurt you financially in the future. All in all, you've just taken a big step forward in making your life at work miserable.

Hollywood vs. reality

Hollywood and television have fostered the misconception that firing back a clever putdown—à la Humphrey Bogart or John Wayne—can instantly bulldoze the other person's resistance.

This farce does ring true to the small minds that blindly accept it but can't figure out why it doesn't ever seem to work for them. They must assume that they're just not as clever as Bogart or Wayne. Otherwise their cut-like-a-knife remarks would surely clear their path.

But if you're willing to intersect the silver screen with harsh reality, you'll find that tit-for-tat retalia-

tion only increases the resistance you get. People fight you harder because you fire up their resentment. Put simply, harsh words beget more harsh words, and retaliation begets more retaliation, not less.

The need to strike back for an injury, particularly one to the ego, runs bone-deep in human nature. So firing back a hard word only escalates your conflicts with people. And at the same time, the friction piles problems and unhappiness on you.

A man I once worked with had a reputation as a liar. But I liked the man at the time, and I still do, so I gave him the benefit of the doubt and took most of what he said at face value. Then he told me a story that tipped me off as to whether he could be believed. Think over his story, and decide whether you'd trust him.

> "I was the sales manager at a store. And I walked in one day to find one of my salesmen arguing with a customer. Because I was in a bad mood anyway, I grabbed the salesman by the sleeve and chewed him out in front of the customer and several other onlookers.
>
> "Suddenly, he wheeled around and hit me right in the face, which knocked me sprawling across the floor. He said 'Dammit, you're not gonna talk to me like a dog in front of everybody like this!'
>
> "It made me mad. But as I dusted myself off and got up, I realized that he was right, and that I had done the wrong thing. So I just shook his hand and walked off. And that was the end of the fight."

That story clinched it for me. I never believed another word he said from that time on. If he told me it was Saturday, I checked the calendar to make sure. That tale ran so contrary to the laws of human nature that it insulted my intelligence.

When was the last time you saw a person in the heat of a fight get up off the ground, dust himself off, and shake hands with the man who had just floored him? I'll bet it's been quite a few years, unless you've been to the movies lately. I know I've never seen it happen. Human nature decrees that people will retaliate for the injuries they suffer, and you'll encounter precious few exceptions to this rule.

Eating crow begets eating crow.

But just as surely as retaliation begets more retaliation, eating crow also begets eating crow. For this reason you'll find it to your advantage to pay back harsh words by eating crow. It settles the other person down and embarrasses him a little for getting so worked up. The best response you can make to rude remarks is "You're probably right."

This may strike you as rather feeble, but I've used this tactic to take the wind out of people's sails so many times that I swear by it. I just say, "I guess you're right," after every one of their angry sentences, whether I really believe it or not. You'll be amazed at how quickly this shuts up even the most foul-mouthed slob.

How can he whip up much anger and indignation if you're "agreeing" with everything he says? He's

got no one to argue with, and he's the only one who got all worked up. Now he feels uncomfortable because his red face sticks out like a sore thumb. And he starts to regret what he said.

My "you're probably right" tactic nearly always brings the hothead who's cutting me down back to reasonable behavior, or at least it shuts him up. In fact I've gotten several apologies by using this tactic—which is something no stinging retort has ever done. After all, eating crow does beget eating crow.

I usually have to fight my insides to force myself to say, "I guess you're right," in the face of an angry, charging bull. Silently enduring the blows to my ego takes a straining, iron kind of self-control. But it really comforts me to know that having the wind repeatedly taken out of his sails by "You're right" probably bothers him more than anything else I could say. Besides, I far and away prefer suffering a little temporary injury to my ego over paying the high price in money and emotions a new enemy would cost me.

A meek stance gives you at least two advantages that proud people never know. First, it holds your dollar and emotional costs to a minimum, because it enables you to undergo very little friction as you deal with people. And second, as was discussed at the start of this chapter, meekness assures that you'll go further in whatever you try. You'll be more successful because you'll dodge some very tempting quicksand: thinking you know too much.

CHAPTER VII

Tactic 6: How to Pick a Person Apart and Discover His Real Motives and Feelings

YOU'RE GOING GREAT GUNS with Lana, a woman you met at work and have dated for about a month. But something one of Lana's close friends told you has shaken your confidence somewhat. Your trouble has appeared in the form of Lana's ex-lover. You hear that he's back in town and wants to resume living with her.

Your informer also confides the even more unsettling news that the relationship was originally broken off, not by Lana, but by her ex. You know all this makes Lana extremely vulnerable to his attempts

to patch things up and move back in. Chances are she's not over him yet.

Visions of old lovers coming back and uprooting you badger your sleep. And you are sure that you'll be minus one lovable soulmate if Lana's ex succeeds in moving back in with her. So you feel a sweaty, anxious need to know exactly where you stand with her.

But simply asking her wouldn't get you a straight answer. After all, you've known Lana long enough to realize that she'd probably just try to smooth things over with white lies.

You'd know exactly what to do now if you had been there with me the day the old con man of the world, Hardy, convened class in the jungle. Hardy could pick a person apart in a matter of a few minutes, and tell what his real feelings were. He could sense almost instantly how a woman or man felt about him, whether a person would hire him, or whether someone was trying to take advantage of him. A device that he developed over many years of conning people for a living enabled him to do this.

The basic idea of Hardy's tactic is to surprise the person with a direct question, then zero in on his uncontrollable immediate reaction. For the first three seconds after you surprise a person with your question, he can't possibly mask his true feelings.

However, after three seconds have passed, he regains his composure. And once again he can prop up a misleading facial expression to hide his real thoughts. But in those three vulnerable seconds, he'll

give himself away to the streetwise observer. Incidentally, while I researched this book, I discovered that several psychological studies have also uncovered this same phenomenon.

When you apply this technique, you'll find the key to the person's true thoughts in the area around his eyes. There his emotions are mirrored with stark clarity. So look your subject straight in the eyes, spring the direct question, then focus on the instant expression that spreads over the area around his eyes and upper cheekbones. Within three seconds you can nearly always tell the person's gut feelings about your question.

If your curiosity over Lana's feelings toward her ex-lover has gotten the best of you, maybe your next move should be to employ Hardy's tactic. (Actually bringing up your concern over her ex probably isn't the best manipulative strategy. But at least it should purge your uncertainty.)

If you decide to go ahead and broach the subject to Lana, mention during the conversation that you heard her old friend is in town and wants to resume his former living arrangements. Then quickly look her in the eyes and ask, "Are you planning to let him move back in?" The immediate reaction you see in her eyes should clue you in to her answer, assuming she's pretty well made up her mind.

Even if she plans to move him back in, she may deny it. But you should know better since her eyes bared her feelings right after your question. When it's used in this fashion, the three-second tactic can

usually thwart people's attempts to mislead you by lying. (Which explains why it's almost impossible to con a con man—he usually knows when a person is lying to him.)

How to determine a person's real motive

Why won't he sign the contract? Why won't she do what you're asking her to? Why? Why? Why? You've got to know the answer to that question before you can manipulate anyone. Otherwise you don't know what obstacle stands in your way, or what you have to overcome to see that things are done your way.

Once you uncover the person's real objection to your ideas, you've gotten your hands on something you can work with. But until you know a person's true objection, any effort you make to persuade him amounts to swinging in the dark. You're trying to knock out what you *think* are his objections rather than the real stumbling block. And most of your guesswork-blows will fall wide of the target. Most likely your manipulatee will quickly tire of listening to your poorly aimed entreaties. So he'll tune you out before you touch upon his actual motive for resisting your point of view.

But if you can ferret out his major objection quickly, you can concentrate your efforts on it. Then you can overcome it while he's still willing to listen to you. By determining his real motive, you know which carrot to dangle in front of him to swing him your way. And using the right appeal the first time

means that you vastly improve your chances of getting things done your way.

The most obvious way to discover a person's objection to your plans is to ask him, "Why won't you do it?" But this elementary question almost never works, because people tell you a reason that sounds good, rather than reveal their actual motivation. This happens because the real reason we do most things is pure selfishness or some other motive that doesn't sound very noble. So people prefer to bury their true motive beneath the cloak of a noble excuse. They hope their less respectable reason never sees the light of day.

Before you can wrestle a person's innermost thoughts from him, you have to ask your questions shrewdly. First, ask him why he won't do things your way and listen to him explain his noble motive. With that out of the way, spear for the truth by countering with, "Is there any reason in addition to that?" For some reason I don't fully understand, people usually bare their true motive when you ask them this seemingly offhand question. And their answer gives you something clear-cut to work with. So you can then fine-tune your appeals to overcome this objection.

Putting it to use

Since I learned this tactic from Hardy, I've put it to good use many times. Once I used it to persuade a woman I was seeing to accompany me on a vacation to New Orleans. It was summer, and she'd been

complaining about her boredom-spawned summertime blues. So I suggested the trip to her as a remedy.

But to my surprise, she declined to go even though she'd clamored all summer for some excitement. And my siren songs of romantic, ivied courtyards fell on deaf ears. "I just can't afford the trip," she shrugged in her refusal.

But I sensed that possibly another reason lay behind her resistance to the trip. So I asked, "Is there any other reason you don't want to go, in addition to that?"

"Well, my parents have already asked me to go with them on their vacation this week, and I told them I couldn't go. So I'd feel guilty about going with you at the same time they asked me to be with them. They'd really be hurt if they found out," she explained.

Immediately I knew that I had hit the real stumbling block—guilt. So I sidestepped it by simply postponing the trip two weeks. After her parents returned from their trip, and a little time passed, she fairly leaped at the chance for a vacation with me in New Orleans. (Although her financial condition hadn't changed in the least.)

Hardy's tactic—"Is there any other reason, in addition to that?"—enabled me to cull the facts from the pretense. Then all that remained was to deal with only her critical objection to my plans, and to spirit her away. Bon voyage.

CHAPTER VIII

Tactic 7: The Guernsey vs. the Brahma

WHY A "POSITIVE ATTITUDE" IS LIKE A GIGOLO

ANY FARMER can describe the unfortunate chain of events that befalls an orphaned Guernsey calf. Hunger soon drives the calf to select from the herd a replacement for its fallen mother. However, when it tries to nurse, the would-be mother cow kicks the newborn calf away, since she didn't birth it. The hapless Guernsey calf then lies down in the pasture and starves to death.

In contrast, even though an orphaned Brahma calf also gets kicked by the reluctant cow, the naturally persistent calf stays after his new mother relentlessly. By the end of the day, the stubborn calf has inevitably forced the now-exhausted cow up into the corner

of the fence, and is nursing contentedly. As a result of its persistence, the Brahma survives.

You may shrug this off as just a cruel quirk of nature, but I believe there's more to it than that. I believe the Brahma's persistence in the face of defeat is the cloth that success in life is cut from.

You have to forge some of the Brahma's determination in yourself to get ahead in our dog-eat-dog world. In business, where the big ones eat the little ones, the ability to rebound from adversity, Brahma-style, often determines who succeeds and who fails.

But if it looks like I'm planning to equate Brahma-like persistence and the popular "positive attitude leads to success" legend, let me put an end to that idea now. You should never confuse persistence with a positive attitude. They aren't the same thing, and they differ in three fundamental ways.

How persistence differs from positive attitude

Where results are concerned, your degree of persistence largely determines whether you'll succeed or fail. However, positive attitude as we know it has little to do with success. It may, in fact, stop you cold.

1. The first way a positive attitude falls short of persistence is mild compared to the other two.

A positive attitude usually makes you come across strong and positive. But a strong come-on immediately makes a person suspect that you're up to something. And arousing a person's suspicion can

only work against you, particularly if you're trying to manipulate him into something.

That's why so many salesmen who act like salesmen (confident and positive) couldn't sell women's favors on a troop train. You know the type: If attitude were lightning, and desire were thunder, their houses would have burned down a long time ago. But their positive attitude constantly scares people off by advertising the fact that something is afoot. So they defeat themselves.

2. The second problem with the positive attitude makes being positive even more dangerous to you. I believe a positive attitude hands you a basket of eggs.

As you look in the mirror and repeat the sacred incantation, "I will be successful," you may start to believe it and become convinced of your ultimate success. And when you become certain that you'll succeed, you begin to worry that any little misstep you take may blow the whole deal. It's like carrying a basket of eggs. You're uptight, inflexible, and afraid to take risks lest you undo your all-but-clenched success.

A person who's running scared and afraid of risks certainly cuts an unlikely profile for a successful person. But those who take on the positive attitude often show exactly these symptoms. I know this because I used to do it myself.

3. Probably the greatest difference between persistence and positive attitude shows up when the going gets tough.

A positive attitude is like a gigolo. It gives you a great deal of comfort and sustenance until you run into hard times. Then it vanishes. Put simply, you can decide to be persistent and carry out your decision when you encounter failure. But you cannot decide to have a positive attitude and maintain it when you're hit by failure.

You may summon up a surface kind of positive attitude by following the advice of several of the well-known success books. Studying your reflection in a mirror and chanting, "I will be successful today!" may well give you a shot of temporary confidence that you find very comforting. But after you get bludgeoned and walked on in the business world a few times, you'll find that positive attitude evaporating like morning fog when the sun comes up.

In your attempts to get what you want, you're bound to find yourself in situations that seem totally hopeless. Many circumstances look so bad at times that no one in his right mind could see the light at the end of the tunnel. So mustering a positive attitude proves impossible. Yet by persistently putting one foot in front of the other, you may still salvage a success out of what looked like a self-defeating quagmire.

Stubborn, Brahma-like perseverance will retrieve many situations where you can't keep up a positive attitude. Persistence often draws its strength from adversity, while a positive attitude nearly always crumbles in the face of hard times.

What successful football players (champions of the positive attitude) have in common with ex-Miss Americas and ex-generalissimos

The supporters of positive attitude are fond of citing instances where a new coach has pumped a winning attitude into a dispirited, losing football team, and then transformed it into a winner. I have no beef with that. Good leadership can undoubtedly spur an organization on by instilling a good attitude in it.

However, the benefits of a positive attitude get lost in the translation from a group setting down to the individual. The winning attitude that fires up and buoys a group won't keep an individual going.

To illustrate, ask yourself whatever became of the members of your high school's championship football team, who radiated such a positive attitude and *esprit de corps*? If they're anything like the champs from my old high school, those scions of the positive attitude are now bagging groceries and pumping gas for a living. The winning attitude that made them successful as a group failed them as individuals in the real world. The power of the positive attitude just doesn't translate from the group to the individual.

This probably happens because the tasks an individual faces as a member of a group, such as a high school football team, differ from those he must perform to succeed on his own. A football player is just required to carry out a few basic tasks, such as blocking and tackling. And these tasks require only momentary effort and minimal judgment.

By psyching himself up with a winning attitude,

the football player receives a surge of emotion that enables him to throw an enormous amount of energy into his simple blocking and tackling. So this tactic provides a powerful success formula for him in a group setting.

On the other hand, however, individual success demands months or years of sustained effort—rather than only four quarters of emotionally charged exertion.

But even more importantly, for an individual to get what he wants out of the world, he has to exercise superior judgment. This judgment is the crucial ingredient that many successful football players don't have. And no amount of positive attitude can summon it to deal with the tangled problems they have to face alone in the business world.

For this reason most successful football players, though still sporting a winning attitude, usually fare no better in their later careers than ex-Miss Americas and ex-generalissimos. They generally eke out a living by endorsing advertisers' products and exploiting their notoriety until the public forgets them.

A useful positive attitude

I'm not saying that there's no such thing as a good positive attitude. A helpful confidence does come from believing that you have all the techniques and the abilities to succeed if it can be done. This type of attitude gives you an advantage in whatever you try.

But you either have this confidence or you don't. You can't fabricate it by telling yourself, "I will suc-

ceed." Such an incantation only gives you a simple-minded positive attitude that will abandon you in a tough situation.

But the kind of confidence that helps you lies much deeper, and it's based on successful experiences. You know you can put the deal together, you know you'll manipulate her, or you're sure you can get the job, because you've done it before so many times.

This kind of deep-seated positive attitude comes from repeated winning and the knowledge that you're very good at something. Confident that you'll finally succeed, you keep trying until you get what you want. As a result, this type of deeply held winning attitude works to your advantage by driving you to persist until you succeed.

Of course reading about this deep-rooted positive attitude won't help you if your experiences haven't already fixed it in you. But there is an alternative.

If a positive attitude won't work for you, what will?

Personally I believe the popular idea of positive attitude is best purged from our memory. But what should replace it?

Any method that supplants the positive attitude sham should enable us to persist until we get what we want, despite the adversity that crops up along the way. I feel that I've developed a method that meets this high standard of perseverance. If you blend some sound judgment with the three steps of

this method, I believe you'll start a Brahma-strong drive for whatever it is that you want.

1. Decide what you want and resolve not to quit until you get it.

Once you decide what you want, you should realize that most things that are worthwhile will cost you a lot of effort and sacrifice. So you have to resolve not to quit trying, as long as you still want whatever you set as your goal.

Many times your goal will look so hopeless and far away that you'll stop and wonder, "What am I doing here?" But vow to overcome these times of despair by forcing yourself to stubbornly put one foot in front of the other Brahma-style until you succeed.

2. Prepare for the possibility of failure. Mentally accept the consequences of failure. Then pull out the stops and do everything in your power to avoid that failure.

I was deeply impressed by the reply an Arab oil sheikh gave an interviewer who asked whether he was afraid of the economic or military muscle the United States might flex. The question came as the Arab was considering imposing another oil embargo on the United States. "No. Despite what the United States can do to us, our people can always go back to living on goat's milk," he shot back.

His statement captures the attitude that overcomes you when you assume failure, and mentally accept the worst that can happen to you as a result of this

failure. Now you're free from worrying about what might happen. So you can unleash all your energies and go all out to avoid failure. Unhampered by worry, you can act flexibly and take a few chances in your struggle to succeed.

To give you the feeling of that flexible attitude, put yourself in this imaginary situation. You're behind the wheel of an old, beat-up car worth about $150 that looks awful but runs fairly well. The road you're driving on is a narrow, one-lane country road that only accommodates one car at a time. You look up and see a man driving a sleek, new Cadillac coming your way. To avoid a head-on collision, either you or the Cadillac driver will have to pull off into the muddy roadside and take a chance on getting stuck so the other car can pass.

Although your jalopy is the logical choice to fend with the muddy roadside, let's assume that you decide that the man in the luxury car could better afford a towing bill if he got stuck by pulling off. So you decide to play "chicken" by driving straight at him, hoping that he'll lose his nerve and give you the road.

You realize that you definitely have the upper hand in this game of chicken because the other man has too much to protect. He's put $14,000 into the car he's driving, and he's probably too busy worrying about how to protect what he has to put much thought into outwitting you. On the other hand, you've mentally accepted the fact that you can always buy another $150 car. And since you have so little to lose, you can

keep your wits and concentrate on outmaneuvering him.

Suddenly a brainstorm strikes. You remember the empty whiskey bottle that's been rattling under your seat for months. You grab it and fling it out the window in a manner that makes the Cadillac driver think you're hopelessly drunk. Horrified by your drunk act, he runs his car into the muddy roadside and lets you pass.

While this situation is clearly unrealistic, it does convey the feeling that overtakes you in real settings when you anticipate failure and accept the worst.

To mentally accept the consequences of failure, you should consider the worst that could happen—you might lose your job, suffer a financial setback, be embarrassed, or whatever. Then resign yourself to accept these reverses if they come, and to continue living with peace of mind in spite of them. Remember, anything that happens to you has befallen countless other people, and they lived through it. So you can too.

After all, you won't be killed or imprisoned for your failure. You'll just have to go back to living on goat's milk for a while. But you can always make a fresh start by finding another job, starting anew financially, or moving on to another goal. Others have done it, and you'll surely make it if they did.

If you can't bring yourself to accept the consequences of failure, chances are you'll begin to worry about failing and losing what you have. As a result, you start to run scared, and your wits become almost

paralyzed as you occupy yourself with holding on to what you have.

In this state you may find yourself an easy mark for a competitor who's flexible and willing to take some risks. For example, politicians who discover that they're well ahead in public opinion polls often fall into this mental trap. Once they feel they have a lead to protect, they shy away from taking the initiative or saying anything that might be controversial. So they leave themselves open to a last-minute surge by their opponent.

In contrast, once you accept as livable the consequences of failure, you feel a tremendous release of energy. Now you feel like you have nothing to lose, so you can go all-out for whatever you want and take a few chances in the process. Since you don't fret over the loss of what you already have, you can relax enough to unleash your wits and exploit your flexibility to the fullest.

This lean and hungry stance is your best chance of succeeding and thus heading off the failure that you've prepared for. As ironic as it may seem, accepting the worst is your best means of combating it.

3. Vow to learn something from every defeat through self-examination.

Only a defeat sharpens your skills and wits; you hardly ever learn anything from a personal victory. Behind every victory lies a harsh defeat that taught you, through self-examination, what doesn't work and what does.

You examine yourself after every failure by criticizing *your* missteps, not the other person's. Figure out what *you* did wrong, then resolve not to make that mistake the next time.

Note that almost every situation in this book that gave me a new understanding of handling people was a defeat at the time. Losing a few hundred dollars to a con artist taught me how to avoid being taken in financial dealings. As reported in Chapter III, losing a girl I cared about to another man pointed up the power of intermittent reinforcement. Undoubtedly successes are built on defeats that are handled correctly.

Applying this three-step method of getting what you want should cultivate a Brahma-like persistence in you—a trait that pays out in terms of success.

Instead of expecting success, mentally prepare for the worst. And since you have nothing to lose, pull out all the stops and use every force you can marshall to avoid failure. Then when success comes, you'll be a little surprised.

CHAPTER IX

Tactic 8: How to Avoid Being Taken in Financial Dealings

WATCH WHERE THE MONEY IS.

"GET YOUR ASS OUT! And you can sweat for the $800 I owe you!" my roommate stung me as he kicked me out of my own apartment at midnight on April thirtieth. I was booted out with no place to go except a motel. And I had to leave my furniture on the sidewalk unprotected.

By kicking me out that night, the Dallas man put the finishing touches on his plot to dupe me of $800. Although $800 isn't a lot of money, having salt rubbed in my financial wound this way did sear that loss into my mind.

Maybe you'd say my $800 wasn't much, and it wouldn't be worth your time to read about how to

stop a person from taking you for such a small amount. But what if we were talking about $28,000 of your money? A friend in my hometown was conned out of twenty-eight grand basically the same way I lost my tiny sum.

You see, the amount isn't important. Con artists finagle $100,000 the same way they grab off a few hundred. Their technique is nearly identical in every setup.

My $800 loss handed me a bitter eye-opener, but I probably would have fallen for the same trick again if I hadn't known the old con man of the world, Hardy. He taught me how to stay ahead of even the slickest con artists.

I sat fuming about my fiscal beating to Hardy one day. In response, he described a tactic that makes it almost impossible for anyone to take advantage of you in money dealings.

Here is his method for surviving shark-infested financial waters:

> Watch where the money is! Whoever holds the money holds the power. As soon as you give a man your money, he can spit in your face, and you can't do a damn thing about it. So hold the money till you've gotten what you want.

This deceptively simple method is based on the fact that if you give a man your money before you receive the goods, he holds all the aces in his hand. With the money in hand, he may give you what he

promised or not. Now only his personal integrity keeps him from giving you shoddy goods or nothing at all for your money. And you know about what most people's personal integrity is worth nowadays.

If the person you gave your money to decides to thumb his nose and give you nothing in return, most of the time there's only one thing you can do: Count your money lost and chalk it up to bitter experience. Also, as my friend crudely but accurately put it, "He can spit in your face," and you still can't do anything about it.

Why you can't get your money back

Now you may say, "I'll be damned if anybody's gonna beat me out of any money he owes me! I'll sue. I'll wreck his credit. Or I'll beat it out of him." But none of these will retrieve your cash. Face it, your money is lost.

Your first threat was "I'll sue." But if you've been gulled by a person, suing him won't recoup your money for these reasons:

—The sum you lose to an individual is almost always small. So it doesn't warrant the money and effort you lose by taking off from work for court.

—Even in the rare instances when the amount of money merits the expense of a lawsuit, your suit would usually be wasted because the crook is almost always destitute anyway. Most con artists have a net worth of about $0. They spend money faster than they can steal it. So you'd have nothing to collect if you won. Just go try to buy a meal with

a court judgment in your favor sometime, and you'll find out why suing a con man is a waste.

—Many state laws are written so leniently that eighty percent of the people in those states have no property the courts can take even if you win.

—Finally, any time lawyers get involved, they grab off so much money that both sides lose anyway.

I think you'll agree that your "I'll sue" threat looks pretty impotent. But don't latch on to your "I'll wreck his credit" idea either; it won't work. The kind of people who sink to conning you in the first place already have a credit file that classifies them as Dillingers. They couldn't finance a loaf of bread, so anything you could do to their credit would be meaningless. Rule this out unless you enjoy beating dead horses.

Now that you've exhausted all your legal alternatives, suppose you're sizzling so hot that you decide to take matters into your own hands. You're "gonna take it outa his hide." But before you fire your first punch, unclench your fists long enough to think about the spiraling murder rate in the United States. And remember, many of those murders started as a fight over a little money.

I don't believe it's worth it to take a chance on getting killed over a few hundred dollars. How much money do you think it would be worth getting killed over? Isn't your life worth more than $800 to you? After you answer these questions, I think you'll agree that a person with much between his ears won't start a fight over money.

As you mentally try out your alternatives for recouping the money you were duped out of, you realize how paltry they all are. And you begin to understand why my streetwise friend said, "Whoever holds the money, holds the power."

As long as you hold the money until you're fully satisfied, things will be done your way. But the minute you let go of the money, you let go of the power. So things will be done your way only if the other guy wants to do it your way—and he probably doesn't. He knows he's got the strategic advantage. And he knows you can't do a thing, even if he does nothing but tell you to get lost, and spends your money with impunity.

The $28,000 con job

There's only one situation where you can get your legal tender back after you've been taken. That's when you're dealing with a well-established business. Threats of lawsuits, and sometimes an actual lawsuit, can get back at least some of your money, if the firm is financially strong. (And if the lawyers don't siphon off too much—and they usually do.)

But sometimes the businesses you deal with are teetering on the verge of bankruptcy anyway, so they stand to lose little by shafting you. For instance, I'll never forget how a hapless friend of mine was conned by this kind of small construction firm.

The man took bids from several contractors for renovating a charming old house he'd inherited. And

the owner of the firm submitting the lowest bid convinced the young man that as a matter of course he had to present the firm a $28,000 advance payment so materials for the job could be bought. But once he received the check, the contractor simply trotted to the bank, cashed the check, and left town.

The police never located the owner of the construction firm, who had probably already spent the money anyway. So, strapped and burned to the tune of twenty-eight grand, the young man was forced to sell the house to pay off the bank loan he took out for the renovation.

The duped man hadn't realized that he gave up all control over the situation the minute he paid before he had been completely satisfied. Once he gave the contractor his money, the builder faced no real compulsion to lift another finger for him.

Knowing this, when somebody asks you for any payment in advance other than a small deposit, alarms should go off in your head, your ears should prick up, and your skin should start to bristle. This person has just laid a deadly financial trap for you. You'd better think long and hard before you blithely walk into it brandishing your check.

You probably have little to fear with well-established businesses you know are financially strong. But many of the concerns you deal with don't fall into this category. These businesses, already skating on thin ice, can't lose much by bilking you.

When you doubt the fiscal strength of a firm (in other words, you suspect that they wouldn't pay off a

lawsuit if they lost it), withhold your money until they've fully satisfied you. Only pay them for the part of the work they've completed. If you get the old song and dance about needing money to buy materials, find out what is needed, and go buy it yourself. Remember, if they can't afford to finance the cost of the materials themselves, then how can you expect them to afford to pay your money back if you have to sue to collect it?

You can avoid ninety percent of the world's financial cons by steering clear of these deals where you pay in advance. Advance payment is the hook in nearly every get-rich-quick scheme, bogus investment deal, worthless stock swindle, or home repair ripoff ever invented.

Obviously you should jump into an advance payment deal with as much relish as you'd jump into a pit of sharpened pungi stakes. But as long as you hold the money until the other man has delivered the goods, you hold all the power. The other party has to do things your way if he wants to get paid.

What if you absolutely must make a payment in advance to some firm or individual of dubious financial strength? Then insist on some real commitment from the other party that would keep him from pocketing your money and backing out of the deal. If the other party balks at this condition, show him to the door. Without this unretractable commitment on his part, you'd be buying a deal where your payoff is based solely on trust. And in today's world trust provides you about as much protection as a tissue paper

door. Remember, a man planning to con you would refuse to make any such commitment.

Watching where the money is can be hard.

Now that you know how critical it is to watch who holds the money, I have to add that applying this simple rule of thumb can be tough sometimes. The movement of money can be too slippery to keep tabs on. You may not even realize as you do it that you're letting go of the money and, at the same time, the control of the situation. This mistake cost me $200 of the $800 I lost to the shyster who kicked me out of my apartment.

I lost $600 to my roommate in the straightforward pitfall of advance payment. He was running a carpet-contracting business out of our apartment at the time. Since I was his "friend" and I trusted him, I naively paid him $600 in advance to carpet my weekend country home. Then I found out how quickly friendship can evaporate. And needless to say my country place still has wooden floors, since the work was never done.

But I didn't even see the subtle process in which $200 moved from my hands into the scheming paws of my roommate. The money—and the control of the situation along with it—can be transferred in deceptive ways. He grabbed off $200 of mine simply because the phone happened to be in my name. In one talkative month he ran up a $200 bill for long distance calls.

Suddenly I woke up one day and realized that he'd

snatched $200 without my even knowing it. Add to that the $600 that I'd paid him but received no carpet for, and he held $800 of mine. Now he held the power. Obviously we would either do things his way or I'd never see my money again. I'd started out with $800 worth of power and wound up with less than none. All in all it was an uncomfortable, pins-and-needles predicament I found myself in.

During the time my roommate was doing all this behind-the-scenes maneuvering, I was getting fed up with trying to live in the middle of his carpet business. The phone was ringing all the time. And nearly every time I expected a call from a woman and answered the phone, somebody would ask me to quote them a price on some double-pile shag rug or something. So I decided I'd just sign the apartment lease over to my roommate and move out in a couple of months before I went crazy.

I signed the lease over to him on April thirtieth. That night my friend seemed to be feeling the heady effects of the $800 he had slipped through my fingers. He began sniffing his newfound power over me, and he liked the smell of it. So immediately his behavior toward me took a three-hundred-sixty-degree turn. Suddenly he began to talk to me more as if I were a dog than his roommate.

Then I told him I'd listened to about all his court-holding talk I was going to, and I insisted that he pay me for the $200 phone bill. He responded by flexing his newly acquired leverage. He swaggered, "I'll give you one hour to be out of the apartment."

He ordered me out at eleven P.M. on April thirtieth. One hour later May first began, and the lease reverted to him. So all I could do was start packing.

How to plug your money leaks

Probably the most common leaking of your financial leverage goes on when you let the other person run up a bill that you don't have control over, yet are responsible for. Allowing people access to your phone for long distance calls is one. Expense accounts for employees, as well as credit cards loaned to friends and lovers, also leak your fiscal sway. Opening accounts for people you contract with is another one.

These expenses are billed in arrears, so a month expires before you can find out the damage done. By that time the bill may have spiraled out of sight.

You spring another leak of power when you lend keys. This may not look like a financial leak on the surface. But look closer, and you'll notice that a person who holds a key to your house or apartment has access to all your possessions. For example, when a woman friend of mine broke up with a man, he used his key to even the score by helping himself to most of her worldly goods. So the lending of that key became financial very quickly.

Hoard your keys like a miser. Every friend, lover, parent, or associate you lend a key to now holds a vital tool of leverage against you. Should your relationship with that person ever sour, watch out—and learn to sleep with one eye open.

Certainly there are many other ways people can subtly transfer money out of your hands and undermine your control of a situation. I've described those that I've seen and suffered through. I leave it to your own enlightened judgment to recognize others that might undercut you in your future financial dealings.

Avoiding a minor financial pitfall

A woman and I sat luxuriating in the shady courtyard of a historic New Orleans restaurant. All the atmosphere was in place except for the sipping of tall mint juleps in traditional southern fashion. Since neither of us had ever tasted a mint julep, the waiter was summoned to bring us a couple of sweating glasses of the drink.

But the drink let us down. Neither of us could stand the taste longer than two sips. With our drinks almost untouched, the bill let me down even more —over ten dollars for something we couldn't even drink.

Likewise, a week earlier I had hurried into a shoe shop to get some plastic taps put on the heels of my shoes. I only had fifteen minutes to get to work, so I asked, "How fast can you put some taps on these shoes?"

"Five minutes," came the reply. So I peeled off my shoes, and the shoemaker went to work. He finished in about two minutes and presented me a bill of four dollars for the work. As I paid the bill, I remembered that a shoe shop two blocks away had done the same job for me for seventy-five cents only a month before.

These episodes involved trivial amounts of money, but they illustrate the folly of okaying goods or services before you ask the price. For instance, if you say, "Go ahead and fix my car. Do whatever it takes," you leave yourself wide open to any price the garageman chooses. (I saw a man hit with a $600 garage bill when he was expecting around $200 by neglecting to settle on a price in advance.)

By striking a price agreement prior to giving your okay, you avoid squandering countless wasted dollars over a period of years. Being too shy to ask the price of drinks, minor repairs, medical fees, and the like can nickel and dime you out of a lot of money over the long haul. And the money you save by always asking prices will easily compensate you for the minor social discomfort it causes.

If you frequent the honky-tonks, the habit of asking prices may also save you from one of the oldest con games around. Some of the seedy characters I lived around had been victimized by this ploy, due to their love of the nightlife.

A stunning, buxom young thing glides up to your table, sits down, and introduces herself. As the conversation opens, she reveals that she has just broken up with her man, and confesses that she finds you very attractive. After a flourish of your sparkling conversation and laugh-a-minute wit, she seems much taken by you, and hints that a little hanky-panky might be in the offing. But first she asks you to buy her a drink.

Distracted by the temptress's low-cut dress, you

hardly notice when the waiter appears. Unaided by a menu, she orders a drink, which she consumes quickly. As the waiter lays your bill on the table, out of habit you reach down and turn it over. You're thunderstruck when you discover that her drink cost you thirty-five dollars. Now you know why night-club owners drive limousines.

Approach loans the way you would approach a rattlesnake.

A tragic idea about lending money has sunk deep roots in the popular mind of Americans. Somehow we've been suckered into believing that by lending a person money you do a favor that strengthens your friendship with him. But one or two loans between yourself and a friend will shatter this naive illusion in short order.

Consider the fact that the roommate who kicked me out of my own apartment could have been called a friend of mine only a few weeks prior to that incident. But the effects of my lending him money for his carpet business completely strangled our friendship. I learned the hard way that good friends will kick and claw each other over the loan of a little money in a way that can shock even the most hard-boiled cynics.

An old Chinese proverb says, with razor-sharp accuracy, "If you want to make an enemy of a man, lend him some money." This saying describes the most dangerous quicksand a friendship can teeter above. Never lend any sizable amount of money to a

friend you care about. (Unless you can consider it a gift.) Instead confine your loans to people you don't want as friends, because you can bet they won't care a tinker's damn for you by the time you're repaid.

Let's dig into this phenomenon a little deeper to uncover its psychological roots. The minute you lend a person a fairly sizable amount of money, he just doesn't know enough ways to thank you. Enjoy it while it lasts; this may be the last time the two of you can call yourselves friends.

Then your debtor goes immediately and spends the money, and uses up whatever good or service he borrowed it for. Now that the money is spent, you've seen the last of his gratitude toward you. Any benefits he received from the money you lent him are now a thing of the past—just like his appreciation for the loan.

Now all that remains of your loan is his obligation to pay you back, and he dreads having to come up with all that money. After all, he's getting nothing out of the money now. And the more he puts off paying you back, the more he dreads it. Then his resentment starts to smolder, it gets fueled by dread, and suddenly it bursts into an all-out unwillingness to repay you.

At this point you may begin to need your money back, but watch out. The minute you start asking him for it, you'll be shocked at how this formerly grateful "friend" recoils and fights like a cornered animal. After you've asked him for the money once

or twice, you can go ahead and write your friendship off as a relic of the past.

Don't count on getting your money back.

The fact that loans ravage your friendships makes them a touch-and-go situation to begin with. Then more troubles are piled on you by the fact that many times you can't even get your money back.

The character types who borrow money a lot make poor repayment prospects. These chronic borrowers usually spend a mountain of money regardless of how much they're making. If they make $2,000 a month, they spent $2,000. But if they only make $1,000 the next month, they still spend $2,000—and your loan makes up part of the difference. Catching them with a fresh paycheck and strong-arming them verbally is about the only way you can recoup the debt.

I've lived and worked around a lot of these constant borrowers. They swarm in the ranks of the con artists. But you're bound to run into these sponges in every walk of life.

As just one example, my office mate at a corporation where I worked lent a fellow employee $100 to pay for the trip to his mother's funeral. It seems that the guy who borrowed the money had been caught short by his mother's unexpected death several hundred miles away.

The timely loan enabled the son to attend the funeral. However, the funeral came and went, and several paydays passed, but the son still didn't offer to

repay the $100. My office mate was beginning to need the money back, so he had to badger the ingrate for the money. But he always claimed to be out of money when asked. The loan wasn't repaid until my friend got the management of the company to arm-twist the reluctant son one payday several months later.

Even the trouble my office mate had collecting his money looks small next to the tangles I faced with my roommate over loans and bad debts. But at least he got his money; I didn't. I lost $800 and got myself booted out on the street while we rasped against each other over loans.

These episodes serve up a simple message: Unless you enjoy getting ugly with people over a few dollars and still failing to recoup your money a lot of the time, only make loans you can comfortably write off as a gift if your debtor doesn't pay you back voluntarily.

A final pitfall of lending money is that a loan makes you vulnerable to your debtor. Now your debtor grabs the upper hand in the relationship, because he holds your money.

Let's assume you make a loan to someone you see most every day. Then there's a good chance that the two of you will disagree over some unrelated matter before he repays you.

If this does happen, you suddenly realize that you're shackled by the loan, and you're forced to do things his way. Clearly, if you ever want to see your money again, you have to stay on good terms with

the guy. After all, he probably won't pay you back if you make him mad. So your position is undercut and weakened until he repays you. Realizing this, he may put off the repayment to hold on to his upper hand as long as possible.

How to avoid loans you don't want to make

When a friend approaches you with "Brother, can you spare a twenty?," how do you handle this socially awkward situation? First you have to decide whether you want to make the loan. Could you comfortably write off this loan as a gift if your friend didn't voluntarily repay you? If not, how can you turn him down?

My old alcoholic buddy Hardy prompted me with some turn-down lines that have kept him from losing even a dime on bad loans in his twenty-five years of rubbing shoulders with con men: Just look your man in the eyes and say, "I don't have twenty dollars. But when you find somebody that does, borrow forty, because I need the other twenty myself." After this the guy probably won't bother you for money again.

If you're plagued by a chronic borrower yammering for loans all the time, try another of Hardy's favorite plots. When payday comes, you know even the borrower has got money, so borrow some of his. Then when he hits you for a loan later on that month, "lend" him money that you owe him anyway. This way you always stay ahead of him, and never risk your own money in a loan.

How to make a loan

If, on the other hand, you decide to make a loan of any size, at least have the unmitigated gall to insist on some collateral. I know you may believe that collateral is unnecessary between friends. But anyone who has been out in the world at all can tell you that many of these personal loans are never repaid. And since people don't loan money to their enemies, these unpaid loans had to be between friends. So if collateral is needed any time, it's needed between friends.

This may look callous on the surface, but it's the only way you can salvage the friendship between yourself and the borrower. When you hold his collateral, you eliminate the cause of resentment between you and your debtor—that is, being forced to hound him for your money.

Because you have his TV, his stereo, or the title to his car, he wants to see you paid off as much as you do. So you can afford to be quite considerate of any slowness in repayment.

This way the emotional friction is held to a minimum. Also, he can't use the debt as an unspoken bargaining tool during some unrelated disagreement. You retain the power in the situation.

A friend who asks you for a loan may act miffed at your crass insistence on collateral, but any worthwhile friendship can stand this small blow. If you're worried about your friendship, try to imagine how quickly "friendship" disappears when you start dunning him for the money.

If you've agreed in advance that you'll just keep the

collateral should he decide not to pay you by a certain date, what can he resent? If you got enough collateral, neither one of you loses when he defaults on the loan.

By suffering a little social discomfort over the issue of collateral, you can hold your friendship together down the line. Besides, if your friend really needs the money and plans to pay you back, he shouldn't balk too much at this condition. Incidentally bankers demand collateral, and they weren't born yesterday.

After having read half a chapter describing the pitfalls of lending money to friends, you'll probably go ahead and do it anyway at your first opportunity. I too had to get burned once before I realized the bad blood these loans stir up. But you'll learn sooner or later, my friend. You'll learn.

However, don't misread my message as a blanket put-down of all loans to friends. Some of your friends really need a loan at times, and you should be unselfish enough to help them out. I've needed loans myself. But when you do help them out, mentally picture your loan as a gift. There's nothing wrong with that. Besides, most of your loans will turn out to be gifts anyway unless you really get ugly to collect them.

Pick up your checks. Don't depend on the mail.

A thought knifed through me one night. And I sat up in my bed suddenly. I was shaken by the prospect that a $2,500 check in the mail to me from my stockbroker might wind up in the hands of the bandit

who booted me out of my apartment. I wound myself tight worrying while I waited for my check. I realized that the apartment the crook ejected me from was the last address I had given the stockbroker.

Since those days of sweating on pins and needles, I no longer wait for a check of any size to come in the mail. Instead, I go pick it up and cash it immediately. If your check winds up in someone else's hands, and he succeeds in cashing it, you're out of luck. It's almost impossible to get your money again from the issuer of the check. So you've lost your money without ever seeing it.

I knew full well that a man who stole $800 from me would gladly steal $2,500 more. So I almost hugged the postman when he handed me the check a week after I should have received it. Fortunately it had been forwarded to my new apartment according to the change of address card I had left at the post office.

I'd been a raw nerve that whole week imagining the shyster sipping a fruit drink and living it up in the Bahamas on my $2,500. (Often I doubt that money can possibly be worth half the anguish it costs us.)

Picking up checks rather than waiting for them hands you another benefit. This tactic stops people from giving you the old "Your check's in the mail" to put off paying you. When you show up and ask for the check, you call their hand. They have to either pay you or wince through a face-to-face confrontation.

CHAPTER X

Tactic 9: Manipulating a Person's Thinking

KNOW WHOSE MIND YOU CAN CHANGE, AND WHEN IT'S BETTER TO SHUT UP.

THE NEXT SEVERAL CHAPTERS explain how to manipulate a person against his or her will. But this chapter tells you most of what you need to know to get your way with people.

After all, the real key to manipulating people against their will is knowing whose mind you can change, and whose you can't. It's like trying to drive a truck through a dense forest. To get through it, you've got to know what trees you can run over, and what trees are so strong that you have to drive around them.

Here's how you can separate those you can manipulate from those you can't. Think of a person you

don't like. Go ahead; who is it? Mentally write his or her name in this space:

Now ask yourself this question: Can this person talk you into *anything* against your will? (Your human nature answers with a resounding "No!") There now, you've already answered the question "Who should I try to manipulate?" for yourself.

There's only one person's mind you should try to change. Manipulate a friend—a person who likes you and respects you. Sound surprising? I'll make it stronger. Try to manipulate anyone else, and you're committing verbal masturbation that only wastes your time, emotions, and patience.

Why? Have you *ever* had your mind changed by anyone you didn't like? About as often as Halley's comet comes around. Right?

Human nature decrees that you, like everyone else in the human race, can be influenced only by those you like and respect. Friendship and respect aren't important, they're everything when it comes to manipulating a person's thinking.

It's all in who says it.

Put yourself in a situation I suffered through back in college and watch this principle working. This has probably happened to you at one time or another, with slight variation. You're trying to charm two or three pretty girls who are only lukewarm to you.

During the conversation you suggest that the group should go to see a certain movie that you tell them is first-rate. The girls shrug off your suggestion coolly, saying that they doubt that the movie is any good.

A few minutes later your rival, and the girls' heartthrob, walks up to join the group, oozing charm and confidence. During the conversation he mentions the same movie you were just praising. "It's a damn good show," he says, touting it. Suddenly—to your embarrassment—the girls just don't have enough good to say about the movie. Now they ignore your red face and actually suggest that the whole group ought to go see the movie. And it's the same one they panned only moments ago when you were promoting it.

It's all in who says it, isn't it? This situation I winced through points to one of the iron-cast traits in human nature: We can only be persuaded by those we like and respect. Who says it is more important than what is said.

Notice how the Madison Avenue advertisers use this maxim to sway our minds. They know it pays to choose celebrities the public likes to endorse their products. You can learn from Madison Avenue. Use what they teach you to swing people to your way of thinking.

The first question you should ask yourself when you start a manipulation should be "Does this person like me?" rather than "What should I say?" Get your

priorities straight. Favoritism and friendship always overpower flawless reasoning when it comes to getting what you want out of a person.

All the logic of Socrates won't change a man's mind if he dislikes you. But if he likes you, he'll overlook your shortcomings, your mistakes, and your verbal blunders. Chances are he'll come around to your way of thinking in spite of what you might say or how badly you say it. On the other hand, do you find yourself trying to change someone's mind and only striking up a big argument? By all means, stop where you are. You're wasting your breath if you say another word—and making an enemy also. Arguing is futile.

Instead, drop the issue, back up, and lay your groundwork correctly. It's time you either made a friend out of the guy or dropped the whole relationship. As it currently stands, the relationship can only self-destruct in pointless arguing.

Application to your love life

I'm sure you already know how all this fits into the oldest scenario known to men and women.

MAN: Please.

WOMAN: No dice. (Can be said many ways. For example, "not in the mood," "migraine," "That's all you're interested in," etc., ad nauseam.)

MAN: But I dropped twenty-five dollars on dinner.

WOMAN: (says nothing, but her look says No dice! more firmly than ever.)

MAN: If you loved me, you would.

WOMAN: (yawns)

Sound familiar? Ever played the man in this little romantic quagmire? If you're like most men, probably more times than you've brushed your teeth.

The man in this drama should have screeched on the brakes before he reached this impasse. He should realize that it's not the romantic logic that's lacking in his breathless pleading. Instead he's just wasting his drooling breath on someone who doesn't really like him or respect him. It amounts to verbal masturbation. He simply hasn't made a good impression.

If a woman really likes you, anything you say will work. If not, nothing will. Even "My grandmother said you should" will melt her heart and her resistance like the white-hot heat of the sun *if* she likes you. Of course I'm not being serious, but you get the idea, I hope. A woman charmed will overlook your blundering, babbling, and ridiculous logic. In fact, she'll probably be acting the same way herself. Fondness works like sorcery.

On the other hand, a Clark Gable script won't get you the time of day if she doesn't like you. If this is the case, your relationship is headed for a Mexican standoff with you as the loser. So back off. Either lay your groundwork correctly by taking time to make a better impression, or drop the relationship awhile. You're shrewd to skip the frustration.

Learning whom to disagree with

When I was in my early twenties, I took a job selling cars, but I always hated the work. Trying to

talk people out of their life's savings five times a day got old quickly. And besides, I failed at every turn. As a result, I decided to quit the car business after only a few weeks.

With my ego completely deflated, I had already quit putting out any effort, which turned out to be the most brilliant move I ever stumbled onto. Though I had decided to quit, payday lay just a week away. So I continued to show up for work until I could collect my final check and kiss the car biz goodbye. However, I certainly had no intention of doing any work. When a customer walked in, I just introduced myself and said, "Let's go for a spin in a new car." I never even gave a sales pitch.

I let the customer drive all over town as long as he wanted to, and I never said much about the car. We just shot the breeze and socialized. We talked about his job, his family and kids—things that would never help me sell him a car in a hundred years. I didn't expect to make any money that way, but it was easy. And it sure beat the hell out of working.

But the most surprising phenomenon reared its head while I was taking it easy and hobnobbing with my customers. I started selling cars like crazy. Customers liked me, and we became friends. And friends are easy to sell cars to, I soon discovered. All of a sudden I started making more money than I'd ever dreamed of. And a few of the seasoned salesmen who said I'd never make it even asked me for advice. They wanted to know how I did it.

As you can imagine, I quit giving sales pitches on

cars. I just befriended people, put human nature on my side, and incidentally sold them a car. It worked like magic, and it certainly saved me a lot of mental sweat and wasted breath. Needless to say, I decided to sell cars a few more months, and I stored away a pile of money.

Rule of Thumb 1: Only manipulate your friends.

If you stick by this rule of thumb, the only people you'll ever attempt to manipulate against their will are those people who already like you. By doing this, you'll avoid jousting with brick walls—opting instead for the far simpler task of persuading those who are already open to you and your ideas.

Clearly you can count on enjoying mountains more success by manipulating those who like you. So by focusing on befriending your quarry rather than dazzling him with your logic, you can usually save yourself from arguments and failure.

In other words, you should be guided by a simple imperative: Sell yourself *before* you sell your ideas, your bedroom abilities, your snake oil elixir, or whatever. If you haven't opened up your manipulatee by selling yourself first, your attempts at manipulation will fail ninety-nine percent of the time.

But if you've sold yourself, and your manipulatee likes you, you've put the weight of human nature solidly on your side. You'll find it hard to fail with human nature doing much of your work for you. Observe Rule of Thumb 1, and you should glide through your manipulations much more smoothly.

Just because I say, "Sell yourself first" or "Make people like you and respect you," don't get the idea that a wave of your hand will accomplish this. Writing that advice comes easily, but carrying it out really isn't that easy.

Unfortunately no book can fully tell you how to make people like you—including Ann Landers's popularity books. So I won't try. However, for a few workable suggestions read Chapter IV, "The World Is Rife with Favoritism." Some solid ideas are in it.

Finally, even though you've endeared yourself to your manipulatee, you still can't throw caution to the wind. As tempting as it might be, don't burn his ears giving him the lowdown on how wrong he is, just because he likes you. That's still verbal masturbation. Now that you know whose mind you can change, your *technique* becomes of overriding importance.

I picked up a powerful manipulative technique by watching some very ingenious (and heartless) manipulators operate. Chapter XII details their craft as they taught it to me, much of it in their own words. And all of it comes from their tried-and-true street wisdom.

CHAPTER XI

Tactic 10: Win Ninety-five Percent of Your Arguments

RULE OF THUMB 2: LET SLEEPING DOGS LIE IF THEY DON'T AFFECT YOUR VITAL INTERESTS.

THERE I SAT in my room seething again after I swore I'd never let her bother me anymore. As my chest tightened in anger, my mind envisioned voodoo dolls in her image riddled with pins. I glanced at the calendar, which revealed April. That meant that this madhouse situation had gone on a full eight months. I just hoped I could stand the pressure for one more month, when summer would grant me my reprieve.

The irony of my problem was that it had all started with such promise eight months before. Back

then I looked forward to the coming year with a big load of optimism. As my last year in college, it would probably be the most carefree period of my life. Brandishing a light course-load and plenty of leisure, I braced myself for a year-long spree of "caution to the wind" good-timing.

As the frosting my two best friends and I planned to embark upon a bold new living arrangement. The three of us leased a two-bedroom apartment with a slim, foxy coed I'll call Rhonda.

Rhonda hadn't been able to locate a female roommate. But her roommate troubles soon vanished as my friends and I eagerly snapped her up and added her to our nine-month lease.

Though we had no romantic interest in one another, an agreement was struck that I would stay in the bedroom with Rhonda. While this setup didn't provide me with any romantic sideline, it certainly blessed me with a provocative line of conversation. (Not to mention a source of mild jealousy for the women I dated, which I found most agreeable.)

But my delight with the scandalous appearances wore out in no time when I discovered the reason Rhonda couldn't find a roommate. The entire nine months we lived together, nearly every contact between Rhonda and me exploded into a fiery argument. Propelled by the heat from our rasping and arguing, the lease on my little Garden of Eden soon became a nine-month hell.

We couldn't see eye-to-eye on anything. Rhonda and I clashed on everything from women's liberation

to whether I should have the room to myself when I had a date. At the time I considered myself a great debater, which only pumped more fuel onto the fire.

I had always felt that debate was a healthy way to bring two people's feelings out in the open and clear the air. But a year of arguments that charged the air with blood bitterness instead of clearing it finally destroyed my stubborn notion. I realized that nearly all arguments wind up involving both parties' personalities, and that sooner or later one person always insults the other one.

As that spring semester of brooding began to grind me down emotionally, and the walls of the apartment began to close in on me, a little reality finally seeped into my brain. One spring day I realized that Rhonda would dance with joy if she knew how I burned inside and brooded over our arguments. It would thrill her to the point of ecstasy to find out that she had drained off so much of my emotional energy, and left me mentally tired about half the time.

Rule of Thumb 2

At this low point in my last year of college I devised Rule of Thumb 2: Let sleeping dogs (and tempting arguments) lie if they don't affect your vital interests. It occurred to me that the strength to pass up a useless argument—especially when you know you're right—is a measure of maturity in character.

By "your vital interests," I mean that you should only disagree on subjects that affect your mental, physical, or financial well-being, or the well-being of

those you care about. Doing this immediately leaves stillborn the petty arguments over politics, as well as any other disagreements that don't affect you directly.

Haggling over issues that don't affect a person's vital interests occurs more often as women progress in the job market. Some women mistakenly assume that to get a fair shake they should hash out all the issues of women's rights with their boss.

You should confine any disagreements with the boss to strictly job-related issues that affect your vital interests—such as equal pay, equal advancement, and the like. If you can get your just deserts without raising the women's rights angle, you're better off. This issue will alienate most male bosses right out of your camp, so avoid it when possible.

Choosing your disagreements

The mature person who deals in reality rather than fantasy quickly senses the basic flaw inherent in a "debate." Debates fester into arguments. No matter how friendly you begin a debate, the other guy will inevitably take a jab at your personality and intelligence—and set your temper on fire when he does.

When your bruised ego begins to brood over the argument, it only burns you up inside. It doesn't bother your opponent. In fact, he probably launched those barbs with this object in mind. So, in effect, he has won.

However, by following Rule of Thumb 1 and Rule of Thumb 2, you can avoid ninety-five percent of these arguments that hack away at your emotions. In the process you'll rid yourself of the troubled state of mind people bring on themselves by arguing.

Living by Rule 1—only manipulate your friends—should eliminate most of your dead-end arguments. Along these lines, the last chapter explained the futility of trying to change the mind of a person who doesn't like you. Since many of the people you deal with won't like you, Rule of Thumb 1 should save you from any arguments with these people. As a result, Rule 1 will take away all those except your friends as potential sources of disagreements.

Then Rule of Thumb 2 augments the first rule by further reducing your sources of arguments. It states, "Let sleeping dogs (and tempting arguments) lie if they don't affect your vital interests."

By only disagreeing with "people who like you" (Rule 1) on only the issues that "affect your vital interests" (Rule 2), you fight just the remaining battles. And these are the essential ones. This final total should be only a small percentage of the disagreements you're tempted to enter.

What I'm telling you here is how to win ninety-five percent of your arguments. By avoiding an argument, you win it. If your opponent can't make you sulk and brood over a disagreement, then that's the same as a victory for you. So to refuse to disagree with somebody is to win without ever having to enter

the ring. If following my two rules of thumb leads you to avoid ninety-five percent of your arguments, then you will have won ninety-five percent of them.

Until you try it, you'll never realize how much mental anguish you can side-step by choosing your disagreements according to these dual rules. You conserve your emotional strength for those battles that you really must fight. And you don't squander your mental resources on pointless haggling.

Where to go from here

You decided, by using these two rules, whose mind you should try to change. But this doesn't mean that you should launch these manipulations with an argument or a debate. A person's mind is simply not changed this way.

At this point—after you decide which battles to enter—the techniques of manipulation come into play. By using manipulation, you outwit your quarry rather than try to shove your ideas down his throat via debate.

But you can learn a technique for manipulating a person against his will and making him like it. I did, and I call this technique "Unargue."

I tagged it Unargue because it accomplishes just the opposite of an argument. An argument yields bitter fruit: an angry adversary, more convinced than ever that you're wrong. But Unargue serves up the opposite: an ex-adversary, beginning to act like a friend who's prepared to let you have your way—and in ef-

fect admit that he was wrong. (A person well manipulated.)

The next chapter details this technique as I learned it from some very smooth people-handlers.

CHAPTER XII

Tactic 11: Manipulate a Person Against His Will and Make Him Like It

THE UNARGUE TECHNIQUE

The Unargue Technique comes directly from street knowledge. As such it is judged by only one benchmark: It has to work. It has to make people do what you want them to—not what they want to do.

PUT YOURSELF in the circumstances below where manipulation is needed in your private life. Compare the methods you would use to handle this situation to those of the Unargue Technique explained later in this chapter. By doing so, you can match wits with the master manipulators.

You're going to dinner with a stunningly attractive woman named Stephanie. Who knows where the eve-

ning may lead? (In case you are a woman, this situation should still interest you. The tactics that devastate women have the same effect on men.)

Dinner and drinks are finished, and you and Stephanie have really hit it off. She's even laughed at most of your recycled stories and your one-liners bootlegged from Johnny Carson. Right now you're a little drunk from the mixture of two screwdrivers along with Stephanie's tempting doses of light petting administered in the Naugahyde booth.

Maybe it's just your imagination, but you could swear you see sparks flying between the two of you. A vodka-caused tide of courage, coupled with your normal recklessness, goads you to check out your suspicions that Stephanie too has heard the call of the wild. So, half kidding but mostly serious, you ask, "Why don't we stay in that cozy little motel across the street tonight? It's so late, and we're so far from home."

Stephanie acts a little stunned at your question, and she barely clings to her composure. Around the edges you see signs of the indecision that's brewing inside her. Suddenly, her emotions take over, and she blurts out an overly loud, "You must be out of your mind . . ." Then she catches herself and softens her voice down to a whisper, "But I've got to be at work so early in the morning. I've got to be up early."

Now the ball's in your court. What's your next move to change her mind?

Next put yourself through a test of your manipulative wits in this business situation:

You've just proven yourself upwardly mobile by landing a well-paying job as an advertising account executive. Your predecessor resigned because he had trouble with your firm's major client. The client, Harry Rock, a self-made millionaire, owns and presides over Rock Metal Buildings, Inc.

Before resigning, your predecessor persuaded a well-known ex-HEW official to endorse your client's metal buildings in a $3-million TV advertising campaign currently being planned. However, Mr. Rock lives up to his name and opposes the agency plan. Instead, he insists that his seven-year-old son Timmy should appear in the ads and sell his metal buildings.

Alarmed at the prospect of losing a major client over this disagreement, your new boss has commissioned you to go change Mr. Rock's mind without blowing the account. He hints that your job security is on the line.

You later hear rumors that your boss has blundered by advancing the ex-government official $10,000 of agency money for the ads, without clearing the move with Rock. So you discover why Mr. Rock's costly state of mind has got to be changed.

Below, the six steps of the Unargue Technique are applied to your task of manipulating Stephanie and Mr. Rock. Compare the methods you would use in these two situations to the tactics I learned from the experts.

1. *Try to become friends. Make the person you want to manipulate like you.*

Chapter X stressed that you make or break your

manipulation in this first critical step, so I won't belabor it here. However, one point is worth restating. If you haven't made a friend out of your quarry, you're throwing away your breath, time, and patience to continue on to any other step. You'll never manipulate a person against his will if he doesn't like you.

In your grab for his favor, playing soulmate to your manipulatee is one powerful tool. The more he sees you as being like himself, the closer you are to handling him/her. Human beings are woefully vulnerable to others who "think just like I do." Reams and reams of psychological research have borne this out. The illustrations below apply the soulmate tactic to your disagreements with Mr. Rock and Stephanie.

> Business: How to endear yourself by playing Mr. Rock's soulmate? In your conversations talk about subjects the two of you agree on. He's a self-made millionaire, so tell him how you had to work your way through college at odd jobs. He's bound to love it.
>
> Probe him on other topics to find areas of agreement. Maybe both of you believe labor unions are usurping too much power. If so, play it to the hilt. One word of caution: There's no reason for pretense here, because anyone with an I.Q. over fifty will spot a phony and resent it.

If during the conversation you see areas on which you might conflict, pass over them lightly. Stick to subjects on which you agree. Even if this strikes you

as buttering a person up, it's a very necessary step. And since you aren't pretending to agree when you really don't, you won't sacrifice your integrity.

The psychology of the soulmate tactic is that Mr. Rock believes that the two of you basically see eye-to-eye on things. As a result his human nature urges him to like you. By the time you reach the impasse over the advertisement, he'll see you as a friend who agrees with him on everything except this issue. You'll find out that agreeing with Rock on everything else, and only persuading him on one subject, is certainly easier than trying to change his view of the universe issue by issue. So stick to areas of agreement.

Despite the fact that lithe, comely Stephanie and clench-jawed Harry Rock seem worlds apart, the soulmate tactic works equally well on her. Maybe better.

> Private: Endear yourself to Stephanie by shunning topics of controversy and dwelling on areas of agreement. If you discover that the two of you are at odds over women's liberation, avoid it. You know she likes plants, so tell her about the Venus's-flytrap you fed flies to. Be her soulmate, not her devil's advocate.
>
> So when you don't exactly concur over what's to transpire after dinner, she'll be easier to manipulate. You'll be friends and soulmates with only one issue to settle.

The soulmate tactic is only one method of getting the manipulatee to like you and become your

friend. Several other solid techniques are discussed in Chapter IV, "The World Is Rife with Favoritism."

2. *Listen, listen, listen. Hear out his objection to your ideas.*

Many would-be manipulators make a ruinous error in this listening phase of manipulation: They skip it entirely and do too much of the talking. They try to take control of the situation by framing a convincing response before they fully understand the quarry's objection to their ideas. So they often miss the entire point of the objection, and wind up arguing over some nonexistent point of contention. But shutting your mouth and doing a little intelligent listening will steer you clear of this mistake every time.

Hearing out the manipulatee's beef with your ideas also yields another strategic advantage. As you listen, you may realize that some of his objections are so shallow that they won't really get in your way. Ignore these. There's no sense upsetting him by haggling over his trivial misgivings.

If you listen closely, you should be able to pick out one or two major objections you'll have to deal with. These will stand in the way of getting what you want, so they have to be overcome. Listening clues you to which issues you must do battle on, and which objections are so minor that your momentum can rout them.

Finally, by listening closely to the manipulatee's objections, you let him know you're not ignoring his feelings. He feels that you care what he thinks. By

doing this you slip past a source of potential resentment and curry more favor with him.

Business: Your conversation has snagged on the agency-client impasse over who's to tell the Rock Metal Buildings' story in this year's ad campaign.

Mr. Rock slaps you with, "You guys lining up some HEW government official to do the ads is a lot of high-handedness." You're tempted to argue the point, but you rein in your overanxious mouth. (Actually Rock's "high-handedness" accusation is probably only a minor misgiving that won't stand in your way. He's probably just been miffed over it.)

He continues, "Anyway, people will believe my son before they'll believe some flaky government official." (You mentally note that this objection sounds like a major stumbling block. You'll have to outwit him on this point to get your way.)

Let Mr. Rock go on as long as he'll keep talking, and wait for more. As you listen, keep picking out one or two major objections you must overcome. When he stops, prod him with, "Is there anything in addition to that?"

"Well, I'd sure like to see my son on TV. He's my only boy. There's his picture on the wall. He'd really get a kick out of it," Rock adds. (You sense immediately that this fatherly pride obstacle is rooted close to Mr. Rock's heart. You'll have to deal with it.) Ferreting out people's motives is covered in more detail in Chapter VII, "How to Pick a Person Apart and Discover His Real Motives and Feelings."

After you've heard Rock out at length, you should have picked out one or two major objections you'll

have to change his mind on. Then go on to step number 3.

Private: In reponse to your hot-breathed suggestion that the two of you check into the "cozy little motel across the street," Stephanie first rebuffed you with, "You must be out of your mind." Then she backed off a little, and began to vent her objections to your lusty proposal. "I have to be at work early" is her first.

You quietly hear her out. Let her get through relating how she has to be out of bed by five thirty in the morning to wash her hair. Then listen to her as she continues on as long as she wants. After she stops, prod her with, "Is there another reason in addition to that?"

"Well, you see that man sitting by the door?" she asks. You nod, and she throws you a curve, "That's my boss. He hasn't noticed me yet, but he will when we leave. No way in hell I'm gonna check into that motel and take a chance on him seeing me," she whispers excitedly.

As you listen, your partially drunk brain notes major objections you have to overcome. You mull over your next step in outwitting her.

3. *Agree with his feelings and massage his ego out of the way.*

Your manipulatee has just cut and slashed at your ideas of doing things your way. And you winced and listened through it all without talking back. Now what will you say?

You've just entered the most dangerous phase of manipulation. When your antagonist attacked your

ideas, his ego figuratively threw down the gauntlet and challenged you to a duel. Mentally his fists are clenched and at the ready.

You realize that one wrong word from your corner will strike the spark that sets him off the way one match can ignite a dry forest. This phase is tense and tedious. But if you can maneuver safely past these hair-trigger circumstances, you're almost certain to grab control of your quarry.

Before you can swing his logic your way, you have to deal with your manipulatee's feelings. You have to massage his ego until his fists unclench. Then you'll have his feelings out of the way, he'll let his guard down, and suddenly he'll be baby-vulnerable to your reasoning.

The way you massage your antagonist's ego is to agree with his feelings—not his point of view, just his feelings.

Now, I'm sure you've seen a lot of people make a stab at the ego massage with the old "Yes, but . . ." routine. But I believe this routine is worse than no ego massage at all. The problem with "Yes, but . . ." lies in its abruptness. The speed with which you pass over his objections always sets off resentment in the manipulatee. I think you'll just wave a red flag at a person if you try to change his mind with this approach. And a charging bull is awfully hard to turn around.

Instead say, "I don't blame you for feeling that way. I've felt that way myself." That phrase will work like a lover's caress to unclench the fists of the

worst hothead. Wouldn't that make you feel better if you were mad?

But don't stop here. When your antagonist's ego begins to relax and settle down, press your advantage. Massage on. Follow up "I don't blame you" by telling how an experience of yours caused you to feel like he does. By the time you get through, your manipulatee should be feeling close enough to you that he'll be wide open to your ideas. You've dealt with his feelings, and they're out of your way for the time being.

Return to the case of Mr. Rock to illustrate this tact in a business setting.

Business: Mr. Rock has just snapped, "You guys lining up some HEW government official to do the ads is a lot of high-handedness. Anyway, people will believe my son before they'll believe some flaky government official."

You massage his ego by gently almost-agreeing, "I don't blame you for feeling that way; I've felt that way about government people myself." As you agree with him, his fists start to relax. So go ahead and soothe his feelings even further by recounting an experience that led you to feel as he does.

You might say, "After handling the advertising for the election campaigns of some politicians, I can certainly tell you there are politicians that nobody should believe."

Notice that you agreed with his feelings about government officials, but not his point of view. You didn't concede that all government officials lack credibility, only that some politicians lack it. Bear in mind that the

closer you get to Rock's position without jeopardizing your case, the better. You didn't paint yourself into a corner, but he's now open to your thinking, because you've caressed his ego by "agreeing" with him.

Next take up Mr. Rock's sentimental, "Well, I'd sure like to see my son on TV. He's my only boy. And he'd really get a kick out of it."

You might calm his feelings with, "I know how you feel. Kids do get a kick out of being in the mass media." Then follow with an experience that led you to feel as he does: "I know I'll never forget when my picture came out in the paper with my Little League team." With Mr. Rock's ego temporarily out of the way, go on to step number 4.

Private: Stephanie has just objected to your plan calling for a no-holds-barred evening in the motel across the street. "I've got to be at work so early in the morning. I've got to be up so early," she complains.

"I don't blame you for feeling that way," you sympathize, "I felt that way myself day before yesterday. I had been up all night trying to meet a big deadline." After massaging Stephanie's ego, go on to step 4.

Handling the worst type of objections, personal insults, hasn't been discussed up to this point. But any manipulator-to-be has to learn to fend off personal insults without angering his manipulatee.

No doubt it takes a near-steel kind of self-control to stay calm in the face of nettles like, "You must be out of your mind!" But a lot of your adversaries will cut you down this way. So, to outwit them, you have to know how to get past their razor-edged remarks.

Most people allow a microsecond between a personal insult and their instinctive comeback. But you'll have to do better. If you give in to the gut drive to return insult for insult, you'll make your manipulatee mad, and blow the whole manipulation. After all there's no way to manipulate a person who's mad at you.

The strength to refrain from responding in kind to a cutting remark is critical. This calculated control separates the manipulators from the manipulated.

The people who make up the unthinking ninety-five percent of humanity fire off these stinging barbs at will. They're basically small people who mistakenly believe that insults help them get their way. But instead of copying their idiocy by firing back, get back at these hotheads by outwitting them and getting what you want out of them.

Handle insults the same way you'd handle any other objection: Ignore them if they're minor. But if they're major, agree with the feelings—not the substance—that they express.

For example, assume that Stephanie has just gasped, "You must be out of your mind."

You might massage her ego by agreeing in a joking manner, "You know, you might be right. I guess I can't fool all the people all the time." Then laugh. Once you've escaped that tension-charged moment, proceed to manipulate the hell out of her.

Next, consider your reaction when Harry Rock blurts, "You guys lining up some government official to do the ads is a lot of high-handedness." This

pointed remark would obviously anger anyone working for your ad agency. But don't fall into the trap of retaliating.

Instead of fighting back, gentle him with, "I know how you feel." Then chuckle a little as you add, "A lot of times advertising people even get high-handed with me. And I'm in the business."

Now you've massaged his ego out of the way by agreeing with his feelings. However, if you'll notice, you haven't damaged your case in the least. At this point, move on to step 4.

4. *Point out areas of agreement. Appeal to common values.*

You use shrewd psychology when you stress areas of agreement. You started a pattern of agreement in step 3, and this step keeps it going. Your pattern keeps opening up the manipulatee to you more and more. About this time you'll begin to seize a measure of control over him.

Regardless of how much you and your antagonist disagree, both of you surely agree on several points. So stress them. To illustrate:

> Business: "Mr. Rock, both you and I are interested in the same thing. I know you want this ad campaign to boost your sales and make you money. And that's the only reason I'm here—to make you money. That's what I'm paid for." Any man who refuses to open up to you after that statement must have a heart of stone.
>
> You can also find an area of agreement on another point of contention: "Mr. Rock, we would both love

to see your son Timmy in the mass media. And I know he'd be thrilled to see himself." (More later on how you'll get Timmy in the mass media and still basically do the campaign your way.)

Private: In response to Stephanie's balking at your plans for a rendezvous in the motel across the street, draw this area of agreement: "We both want you to have what you want, and not do something you wouldn't like. And I don't want to see you get in trouble with your boss any more than you do." Odds are, her resistance will begin to melt under the heat of your agreeably phrased sentiments. People, as a rule, are touched deeply as you underline areas of common agreement and common objectives.

5. *Overcome his objections by stating your case right.*

Before you state your case, you should pick out the one or two major objections you have to overcome to get your way. You should have done this mentally during step number 2, the listening phase.

You need not do battle over every misgiving your adversary can dream up. After all, if you handle his one or two major objections, your momentum will mop up any remaining misgivings. As he comes to agree on the major points, he'll resolve his minor objections himself. This phenomenon works the way the loss of a major battle brings on the rout of the whole army.

If you've done steps 3 and 4, your quarry should be opened up to the logic you zero in on his major objections. But even with his defenses crumbling, you can't shove your ideas down his throat. A bullish power play as you state your case can still shake his calm and set off his resentment. Even now you have to use some delicate footwork to finish the manipulation.

The method you use in stating your case should overcome the manipulatee's objections without stirring up his resentment. Here's one of the best ways to get this done.

In response to a major objection say, "Nine out of ten times you would be right. And I believe you would in this case too, but it has unusual circumstances that make it a little different." Then explain those circumstances to your antagonist, and tell him why it's in his best interest to do it your way.

Business: This "nine out of ten times" device should work on Mr. Rock. First, take on Mr. Rock's objection that "people will believe my son before they'll believe some flaky government official."

Chances are that you can get past that objection without upsetting Rock by stating your case this way: "Nine out of ten times you'd be right. I suspect that ninety percent of the time, people would believe a boy before they'd believe a politician.

"But I think this situation has unusual circumstances that make it a little different. The ex-HEW official the agency recommended isn't just the average politician.

He commands a lot of credibility. One public opinion survey last year found that he was the eleventh most trusted man in America.

"Also, he's considered an authority on construction. That by itself will make people believe him. I know the man can sell a lot of metal buildings for you, and make you a lot of money," you say, leaning hard on the "money." (Now take note. Here's where you really pour the tricky psychology to him.)

"Don't get me wrong, Mr. Rock. The guys down at the agency aren't married to the idea of using the HEW official in the ad," you tell him. (You know this is absolutely *not* the truth, but there's a very good psychological reason for saying it.)

You continue, "We'll be happy to do the ad any way you tell us to. After all, it is your business. All we're interested in is making you as much money as we can." If it's at all possible to talk Mr. Rock into doing the ad campaign your way, stating your case like this should do it.

Notice the bit of reverse psychology at the end of your persuasion? That little "I don't need you" switch is the big secret to changing somebody's mind. In effect you've told Mr. Rock, "We don't *need* to do the ad our way. It doesn't matter to us. You're the one who *needs* it. Not us. We're just trying to help you."

Why is this reverse psychology so important? As I explained in depth in Chapter V, "The Essence of Manipulation," the minute Mr. Rock senses that you need him, he throws on his mental brakes.

It's an iron-clad law of human nature that we get stubborn when we sense that others need us. If Mr. Rock ever suspects that your agency has already advanced the HEW official $10,000, no amount of TNT could ever blow him out of his stubborn position.

But when he sniffs the idea that you don't need him—that instead he needs you—watch him change his attitude. Now human nature is on your side. Suddenly he'll act more than grateful for any help and advice you might give him. You've outsmarted him by handling him right. And he even appreciates your "help."

Any time you state your case, remember to add this "I don't need you" disclaimer before you stop talking. This bit of deception rallies the weight of human nature around your case. In fact it's the crux of successful manipulation.

The "nine out of ten times you'd be right" tactic is a good way to lay out your case. But there are some situations that just won't fit into this approach, your problems with Stephanie for instance.

When you realize that the "nine out of ten" tactic won't fit your set of circumstances, follow this pattern in stating your case:

(1) As in step 3, once again agree with the manipulatee's feelings he expressed in his objection to your ideas. (2) As in step 4, stress once more an area of agreement. (3) Then overcome his objection by giving him good reasons why it's in his best interest to do what you propose. To illustrate, consider how

you'll overcome Stephanie's major objection. She worries that with her boss sitting by the door a rendezvous in the motel across the street is *too risky.*

Private: She has just said, "No way in hell I'm gonna check into that motel and take a chance on him seeing me."

You respond, "I know how you feel. It's risky—no denying it." (First, you agree with her feelings rather than try to convince her that the venture isn't risky. There's probably no way you can persuade her of that anyway. So you would just make her mad and start an argument by fighting that angle.)

You continue, "I wish it wasn't so risky, because I don't want to see you have trouble with your boss any more than you do." (Second, you stress an area of agreement in your silver-tongued style.) "But all the best things you ever do in life take some risk. Taking a little chance is always something you have to live with." (Third, you give her a good reason why it's in her best interest to do things your way.)

Then add your "I don't need you" disclaimer as your knockout blow, "But listen, it's all up to you. Do whatever you want to do. I'll understand either way. It's your decision." If that speech and her human nature don't overwhelm her resistance, nothing will.

This three-stage method of stating your case works best on the most common category of objections. This big group of objections—like Stephanie's "too risky"—all boil down to "too much" of something. "Too high" or "you want too much money" is prob-

ably the objection you'll run into more than any other.

Learning to handle the "you want too much money" complaint is important to you. The ability to overcome this "too high" objection can make you more money than any other single bit of knowledge you might have. If you can manipulate a person on this point, you'll be able to extract the top dollar for anything you sell. Also, you'll be able to talk your way into a top salary from anyone you work for.

The three-step pattern that overcame Stephanie's reluctance over "too risky" will work the same magic on the "too high" objection. For example, imagine that you're trying to sell your TV to raise some sorely needed cash. A man who answers your classified ad examines your TV set, watches it play, then turns it off. He says, "The TV's fine, but seventy-five dollars is too high."

"I know how you feel," you reply. "All TVs are too high. I had to pay too much for it when I bought it new." (Agree with his feelings.)

"Just like you, I wish they were cheaper. I know you want to get a good deal on a TV. And I want you to get the best price you can, too." (Point out areas of agreement.)

"If you've looked around, you already know that seventy-five dollars is a real good price on a TV in such good shape. You can't buy one for any less anywhere." (Give him good reasons that what you propose is in his best interest.)

"I'm not saying you should buy a TV. That's up

to you. But if you want one, that's how much they cost. I know I'll sell it to somebody today because I've had so many calls. And a lot of people are coming to see it. It's up to you whether you want it or not." (Add your disclaimer, which puts him on notice that he's the one who needs you, not the other way around.) By stating your case well, you'll probably get the seventy-five dollars you were asking for the TV.

6. *Save face for the manipulatee every chance you get.*

You should use this sixth step all the way through your manipulation, rather than reserve it for last. Saving face merits your attention in every phase of manipulation.

Obviously you haven't manipulated a person until he agrees to do things your way, and in effect admits he was wrong. But if you're going to get his concession that he was wrong, you'll have to save face for him.

Admitting that he's wrong is one of the hardest things a person ever has to do. So if you ever expect your antagonist to do this, you must make it easy for him.

Just by manipulating a person according to steps 1 through 5 of Unargue, you've made it easier for him to give in to you. Notice that every step of the way you've taken pains to calm his ego, so it won't be an obstacle.

There are two other tactics that along with Unargue ease your manipulatee's admission of error.

The first one you use by admitting that you were wrong on a minor statistic or some other point that won't really hurt your case. When you do this, your quarry thinks, "I beat him on that point. So now I can give in on something else, and I still won't look bad." When your manipulatee starts thinking these kinds of thoughts, giving in is made easy for him. Your victory is close.

If, during the conversation, you see an opportunity to concede a minor point, grab it. Quickly admit it if you were wrong in any way. Then thank your antagonist for correcting you with, "I'm glad you straightened me out, so I won't keep making that mistake." By doing this, you start a pattern of concession that he'll likely follow.

Another tool for saving face for the manipulatee is a compromise on your part. When you compromise, it affects the other guy the way yielding a minor point affects him. He feels that he has squeezed a concession from you; now he can give in to you on the major issue and still save face. After seeing you compromise a little, he can let you have your way and still hold his head up.

Returning to the illustrations, imagine how a compromise on your part could bring Mr. Rock into your camp. He's already leaning your way because you've handled him right so far. Making the right concession now could be the deft stroke that draws his okay for doing the ad campaign your way.

The ace you play now could be the unveiling of your plans to make his son Timmy the star in a

newspaper ad campaign that would support the TV ads. With his fatherly instincts satisfied, and after having grappled enough concessions from you to save face, Mr. Rock will probably okay the agency plan of using the ex-government official in the TV ads.

Assuming Mr. Rock does give in, you can play the triumphant conqueror when you return to the agency. You're the new boy made good. You've even made the lines on your boss's face crinkle into a smile by retrieving his $10,000, which seemed certain to go down the drain. And equally important, you feel a big swell of confidence as you mentally dub yourself "manipulator *extraordinaire*."

Returning to your problems with Stephanie, I'm sure you've already figured out a compromise on your part that might change her mind. As it now stands, she insists, "No way in hell I'm gonna check into that motel (the one across the street) and take a chance on my boss seeing me."

Clearly your compromise should be, "Since your boss might see you go into the motel across the street, let's don't take a chance. I know a motel about a mile away where he'll never spot us." (Of course, you realize that this compromise is just painfully obvious. It's not a stroke of genius on your part.) Now that you've started the concession pattern, maybe Stephanie will cave in to your devilish proposition.

Whether she gives in or not, since you're the self-proclaimed manipulator *extraordinaire*, surely you've noted something false in Stephanie's major objection. Her fear of discovery by her boss has to be a token

objection. She knows as well as you do that your city has plenty of motels safe from her boss. Her real objection lies in her fundamental doubts that she should be involved in this kind of motel tryst to begin with.

But Stephanie hasn't mentioned this objection, so you shouldn't deal with it openly and directly. Instead, she has propped up a surrogate objection to see how you handle it. But you know that by dealing smoothly with this token objection, you can indirectly overcome Stephanie's real misgivings. If Stephanie likes the way you talk past her "too risky" facade, you've clinched your victory.

The steps you've followed in your manipulation of Stephanie and Mr. Rock are:

1. Try to become friends. Make the person you want to manipulate like you.
2. Listen, listen, listen. Hear out his objections to your ideas.
3. Agree with his feelings and massage his ego out of the way.
4. Point out areas of agreement. Appeal to common values.
5. Overcome his objections by stating your case right.
   a. Use either the "nine out of ten" tactic or the three-step approach as you state your case.
   b. Add the disclaimer of need at the end of your persuasion.
6. Save face for the manipulatee every chance you get.

By following the six steps of Unargue, you'll probably get what you want out of Mr. Rock and Stephanie. During the six steps, you've massaged their feelings and held their egos in check while you worked to take what you wanted from them. And they never felt a thing. That's what manipulation is all about.

The paraphrase below captures the whole idea of manipulation:

> The reason rivers and seas receive the homage of a hundred mountain streams is that they keep below them. Thus, they are able to reign over all the mountain streams.
>
> Though his place be above men, they do not feel his weight. Though his place be before them, they do not count it an injury. (Lao-tzu, Chinese sage, circa 500 B.C.)

What can you expect in the way of results?

Now that you've knocked yourself out in these manipulations, what results have you achieved? If your experience is in keeping with that of most people who use a technique like Unargue, you can expect plenty. About half the people you manipulate will agree to give you what you want during one of the six steps of Unargue. And most of them will do so during steps 5 or 6 as you state your case and make face-saving concessions.

But as you apply Unargue in the future, the number of people who give in during steps 1 and 2 will astound you. Many people will agree to do

things your way simply because you made them like you. This has happened to me many times.

Also, as you hear out people's objections to your ideas, they often realize that they can't justify their position at all. So you may gain your victory just by keeping your mouth shut and listening—an all-too-rare ability.

If half of your manipulatees let you have your way during Unargue, does that mean you failed on the other fifty percent? Not at all. Many times when a person doesn't give in to you, he's stuck in a "yes-no" state. By this I mean he's paralyzed by indecision. He's wondering frantically, "Should I? Shouldn't I? I said I wouldn't do it, but he sure is convincing. Maybe I should. I just can't decide."

When you've conjured up this yes-no state in a person, you know your Unargue has done its job. Regardless of how tough and obstinate a person usually acts, when you get him embroiled in indecision, he can be led like a child.

But you have to do it right, or risk blowing your all-but-clinched manipulation. A mistake at this stage can send all your previous hard work down the drain. The next chapter, "A Little Pressure Has Its Place—But Seldom," tells you how to deliver your fell stroke when your quarry shows signs of the yes-no state.

Certainly you realize that some people you try to manipulate are impossible to swing your way. Some individuals can't be swayed by even the most masterly persuasion.

Often a person's mind may be too fixed to change, or factors beyond your control may defeat your best efforts. But as you pile up more experience with manipulation, your sharpened wits will teach you to recognize most of these dead-end situations in advance. By doing so, you won't waste your effort on unwinnable battles.

But by using Unargue on the nuts you can crack, you'll get your way so often that it will make you smug and cocky if you don't watch yourself.

Where Unargue came from

This technique comes straight from street knowledge and life in the business jungle. You won't see it in many books or learn it from ivory tower college professors. The reason is simple. Writers and professors, like most professionals, just *try* to sway people. But they don't have to be successful at it to survive. They get paid whether they actually persuade anybody or not.

What's even worse, professors simply give *you* an F when *they* fail to persuade you to their way of thinking. So you can understand why most colleges impart precious little practical knowledge to students. They aren't measured by the same down-to-earth standards that Unargue is judged by.

Unlike the methods of writers and professors, Unargue doesn't have to be interesting, philosophically sound, or moral. It just has to work. It has to make other people do what the manipulator wants them to do, not what they want to do. Otherwise the manip-

ulator won't make a living, and he'll starve. That presents a pretty compelling reason to get practical fast. Doesn't it?

That's what I believe this chapter gives you: a tool that isn't always glamorous, but it is practical, and it is always dependable. After all, it's been tempered with hard experience. And if you can forge the self-control to follow the steps of Unargue, it will get what you want out of the majority of people you decide to take on.

CHAPTER XIII

Tactic 12: A Little Pressure Has Its Place-But Seldom

YOU'VE WORKED the whole evening to sell Stephanie on your idea that as soon as the tab is paid, the two of you should depart the restaurant in favor of a cozy motel room. But she can't seem to make up her mind one way or the other. Seeing this, many men would assume that they'd failed. But you know that in manipulation, as in war, the fortress that parleys is half taken.

You've worked Stephanie into a yes-no state by almost overcoming her misgivings about the motel. She's thinking, *I know I shouldn't, but I'd sure like to. He's really a sharp guy, but I just don't know. Maybe I'll just let go and do it. I don't know what to do.* She's mentally paralyzed.

Once you sense that your manipulatee has entered this yes-no state, a little pressure properly applied will get you to your goal. In this confused state even

the toughest person can be controlled like a puppet, with the right nudging. Like other people Stephanie will naturally follow the person who confidently leads her out of indecision.

"I'll go call and reserve our room then," you say, as you assume that her indecision means "yes." Then you get up and head for the phone. If she doesn't voice an objection, you've manipulated her by assuming a "yes" response. It will be hard for her to back out after you've made the reservations. Besides, she didn't object when you got up to make the phone call. In fact, her silence implied that she agreed to your proposal.

Two kinds of pressure

There are two effective types of pressure. The first is assuming a "yes," which you just used to prod Stephanie. As you did with her, you can tailor this technique to fit different romantic situations. For instance, you may assume a "yes" by picking a woman up and carrying her to the bedroom, à la Clark Gable. Or you could just get up to lock the door and turn out the lights, which is easier on your back than the Clark Gable routine.

This bit of pressure works so well because an indecisive person suddenly can't think of any reasons not to do what you're firmly suggesting. Jumping back and forth between "yes" and ""no" almost hypnotizes your quarry, and renders him unable to resist strong positive pressure. I don't fully understand this

phenomenon. But any manipulator will tell you it's real, and that there's power in exploiting it.

I said above that there are two effective kinds of pressure, with the assumption of a "yes" response being one of the two. The other type is the step that comes before the "yes" assumption, and sets it up. This step consists of silence—good, old-fashioned shutting your mouth. And this silence is the most powerful form of pressure you can apply short of physical threats.

To use silence, you sum up your case in a sentence or two, ask for whatever it is that you want, then *shut up*. Don't say another word until the manipulatee answers with some kind of physical or verbal gesture. No other pressure can even remotely approach the pressure of silence.

Obviously, when you use this silence tactic in your love life, you may want to skip stating your case, because it would sound stilted most of the time. Instead, just ask for whatever action you want, then shut up.

The silence tactic naturally sets up your fell stroke, assuming a "yes." If your manipulatee doesn't give you a definite "no" after a minute or two of silent pressure, assume a "yes" and take it from there. Any time the other party acts indecisive in the face of your silent pressure, you know he's in a yes-no state. At this time, he can be controlled by a strong, firm shove.

The silent setup followed by assuming a "yes" is the ideal method for sealing your victory.

Knowing when to apply pressure

Anyone who has ever talked to a pushy salesman knows what's wrong with too much pressure applied at the wrong time. It makes your manipulatee uncomfortable and mad. And a mad person is hard to control.

To keep this from happening, look for the two signs below before you turn on the pressure. If your quarry shows these two conditions, then you can be sure that your burst of pressure won't make him mad:

(1) As you talk to him, you should get the feeling that your Unargue is overcoming his objections. In other words he shouldn't be disagreeing with you as much as he was when you started.
(2) He should be in the undecided yes-no state.

When you see these two conditions in a person, you know he's already leaning your way. So he won't resent the pressure it takes to push him off the fence and solidly into your camp. In fact people appreciate it when you help them out of this uncomfortable "can't make up my mind" position.

Now that I've told you how to time your surge of pressure, let me warn that it's not that easy for a novice to do it right. The knack for perfect timing only comes from trial-and-error. So the first few times you try it, you'll probably apply the pressure too quickly and scare your manipulatee off. But more

experience will teach you to synchronize your shot of pressure exactly with the yes-no state.

Pressure in a business setting

I heard an investment banker complain that he only had one big problem in getting college-trained employees tuned in to the real business world. They couldn't bargain. They were scared to grab control of a situation and apply pressure at the right times.

He said these young bankers often retreated from a bargaining session to his office and told him they couldn't close a deal. The veteran responded by ordering the novice bargainer to walk back in there, look the other party in the eye, slam down his fist, and say, "That's it!" Inevitably the novice would whine, "I can't do that. He'll get mad, and we'll lose the deal."

But when these young men were forced to slam their fists on the table and firmly tell the prospect "That's it! That's the deal," the trainees closed nearly every deal. They couldn't believe how simple it was.

There comes a time in every bargaining situation when you have to take over and apply some pressure to close the deal. Until then you should play meek and let the manipulatee do most of the talking.

But the moment you overcome his major objections and spot the confused yes-no state, you should deliver your final thrust. Now you act like a lion by seizing control of the situation. You grab control by doing this:

1. Look him straight in the eyes, and don't look away.
2. Give him your one or two strongest points in a confident voice. Look him in the face and tell him firmly, "That's it. You're on a good price, and it's what you want. You know you can't get it for less anywhere else. Now let's do business." Then shut up. Don't say another word until he says "yes" or "no." This silence will pressure him far more than anything you could say.

   Or if you're asking for a raise, say, "I'm a good employee. I make you lots of money, and I'm worth it. So can you okay the raise?" Then shut up until he replies, even if several minutes of silence follow.
3. In a bargaining situation, if you get an indecisive physical or verbal gesture, or if the silence has gone on awhile, assume a "yes" response. You do this by handing him the pen to sign the contract, or by calling your secretary to type up the contract based on the terms you last proposed. Then talk about something other than the deal while you wait.

When you assume a "yes" response, even the meanest businessman will do what you tell him to if he's in the undecided state of mind. You can lead anyone in this condition with a firm prod. The moment you hand him the pen to sign the contract with, he's unable to think of any reasons not to do as you ask. So he signs the contract.

A show of pressure also offers you another advantage. If the other person is trying to bluff you, he'll

usually admit it when your pressure calls his hand. If he's pretending that you're asking too much money when you know this isn't the case, a show of force should draw out his real feelings.

Quick manipulation using social pressure

Briefly I'll mention one other type of pressure. It works in a social setting that includes several onlookers. To use it, you ask a person, who knows he's being watched by others, a question he can't answer with "no."

For instance, in a crowded restaurant a strolling minstrel asked me, "What song do you like?" Answering this question with a "no" is impossible; the only response it allows is the title of a song. Of course if I named a song—and I did—the minstrel would sing it at my table to my dinner companion.

With all those people watching me (my date included), I suddenly realized during the second verse that the songster had me over a barrel. Not tipping him a dollar for his tune would publicly label me a cheapskate. So after the song I caved in to the social pressure and flipped the shyster a dollar. I never liked being conned out of my money, so you can imagine that I enjoyed that scheming minstrel's song very little.

As I left the restaurant that night, I made a mental resolution that if I'm ever elected president, all the strolling minstrels will be rounded up and shot.

CHAPTER XIV

Tactic 13: If All Else Fails, Try the Dirty Way

I ALWAYS ASSUMED that if one person tried to persuade another to do things his way and failed, the game was up. Better to try manipulating someone else than to waste your time and energy on a hopeless case, my reasoning went.

However, after you've failed through the normal channels of persuasion, there's still one possibility you probably haven't tried: Manipulate the person the indirect way. I was introduced to this heretofore unfamiliar tactic by watching Hardy underhandedly sell a man a bedroom suite he didn't want.

At the time, Hardy had resorted to selling furniture because his reputation as a drunkard kept him from landing a job selling either cars or real estate. He'd been hired and fired by nearly every Houston car dealer, and more than once by several of them.

The day I went to see Hardy at the furniture store,

an executive type about forty-five years old came in looking for a bedroom suite with a king-size bed. The man looked at the only such bedroom suite Hardy had in the store, and said he didn't particularly like it. But Hardy sized up the situation quickly, and spotted the man's weakness.

A shapely blonde, who looked to be half his age, clung to the executive's arm like she had put down roots there. Their behavior told everybody that they were lovers, although neither wore a wedding ring. And Hardy suspected that he could manipulate this man through his woman friend. After all, she no doubt exercised a powerful influence over him, and would spend a lot of time in the king-size bed.

The woman indicated that she liked the furniture fairly well, so Hardy went to work buttering her up by selling her on the bedroom suite. When the man's back was turned, Hardy joked and flirted with his companion. She really liked Hardy, who was quite a ladies' man anyway. And she talked the executive into making an offer for the furniture.

Her man friend still didn't want the bedroom suite, but he asked what kind of discount price he could get by buying all six pieces together. Hardy cleverly quoted him an inflated price, which the man reduced by $200, and said, "I'll pay that, but not a penny more." The executive thought that he'd made an offer the store wouldn't accept by whittling $200 off the figure that Hardy had told him was the store's bottom price.

Hardy consulted the store manager, who gladly

approved the sale at the figure the man offered. Now the man couldn't back out and still save face with his girl friend. So he found himself buying a bedroom suite he didn't even want because Hardy had manipulated him through his companion. This coup Hardy pulled off was a brilliant manipulation. Whether or not it was a decent thing to do is another story.

As an epilogue, Hardy told me the same man came in the store two days later to pick out a bedspread to go with his new bed. The man confided that he'd gotten several compliments on his new furniture, and that he had begun to like it himself.

You might also be interested to know that the executive's woman friend called Hardy a few days later and asked him out for a drink. But no sooner had he called me to brag about it, when she called him again to back out. Still, Hardy had a nice commission from the deal to console him.

This episode points up a whole new avenue of manipulation that most people are entirely ignorant of. When you find yourself getting nowhere with somebody through normal channels, you can sometimes change his mind through a person who exercises a lot of influence with him. You can often enlist as an ally your manipulatee's best friend, lover, boss, or wife.

In the indirect plan of action, you sell this influential on doing things your way, then sit back and let him talk your manipulatee into it. This indirect influence is surprisingly powerful because your manipulatee believes that it's coming from an impartial source. While he may suspect your motives in per-

suading him, he's unlikely to question the motives of a friend he trusts. So a close friend can often swing a person your way far better than you can do it yourself.

Using "the dirty way" in your love life

If you're attempting to charm someone and failing at it, it's high time you backed off and played a little hard to get. You don't want to let him or her think you're desperate. Try a little less front porch and a little more back alley.

While you're cooling things on the direct front, you might try to get to your heartthrob indirectly by charming one of her friends. Then capitalize on the influence process that works between friends. When the woman you're after starts to hear her female friends admiring you, she may decide that her first impression was wrong, and that taking a second look at you is in order.

To understand the power of this indirect approach, think back on how strongly it shapes your opinions to hear your friends admire a certain woman. Your friends' comments can lead you to believe a woman is really something special when you'd paid very little attention to her before.

Undeniably a large part of our calculations in choosing lovers and mates consists of how much we think others will be impressed by our having caught him or her. How envious we predict others will be plays a central role in our selections.

So if you have women saying that you're fantastic,

the woman you couldn't get anywhere with may take a second look. She may start desiring you if her friends, whose opinions she trusts, think you're an exceptional catch. By putting the relationship with the woman you want on the back burner and charming her friends for a while, you may very well wind up with the woman you wanted, plus her friends.

If you're a woman, you'll be happy to know that men are just as vulnerable to this indirect manipulation.

CHAPTER XV

Tactic 14: How to Squelch Ingratitude Before It Starts

I ENTERED the business jungle at the wet-behind-the-ears age of twenty-one. And during my first year there, I fought more bouts with ingratitude than I'd fought in all my previous twenty-one years put together.

But I emerged completely dried out behind the ears after a year of living with and dealing with con artists and other assorted manipulators. (And I was minus a sizable amount of money they conned me out of.)

In the process I learned to cure ingratitude by using intermittent reinforcement, the technique described in Chapter III. And ever since I discovered how to stop ingratitude before it gets started, my

life's been easier. I've never again had to suffer the emotional sting that comes from feeling betrayed by a friend.

What helping people gets you

From our birth, society teaches us that by always being good to someone and making sacrifices for him, we make a friend who'll give us good things in return. But a short time in the jungle will kill that notion.

My first charitable act was to play Florence Nightingale to a broken-down drunk named Hardy. I tried to help him lick his drinking habit. My reward? He zeroed in on a woman friend of mine as a bed partner. She shocked me by telling me that my "friend" had tried to seduce her many times.

Next I helped a broke "friend" start a carpet installation business. Since he didn't have any money, I lent him his first capital and let him run his fledgling business from my apartment.

How was I repaid for all this when his business prospered to the point where I signed over the lease on the apartment to him? He kicked me out of the apartment at midnight on April thirtieth, the moment he took over the lease. He gave me notice that I was to have everything I owned out in one hour. In addition, he swaggered that I could "sweat it out" for the $800 he still owed me. I never received a penny of it. When I think about that experience, it still leaves me a little numb to this day.

I spent the next several weeks licking my mental

wounds. And I found out that it takes a while to get over the shock you feel after a blast of ingratitude from a "friend." As I brooded, I put together what I labeled "The Formula of Ingratitude." Even though I was nursing a slight depression at the time I devised it, I believe you'll agree that my formula reflects hard-nosed reality.

The formula of ingratitude

The amount of ingratitude you get is directly proportional to the debt a person owes you.

In other words, the greater the debt a person owes you, the greater the ingratitude he'll show you. And likewise, the smaller the debt a person owes you, the smaller the amount of ingratitude you'll get from him.

When it first hits you, this mean quirk of human nature seems mysterious. But it stems from a cause that's easy to understand. In fact, it's only a mystery to those who bury their heads in the sand and moan, "Why did he treat me that way after I did so much for him?"

Ingratitude is the end result of a process that goes on in the mind of the person who owes you a big debt. He knows he owes you so much that only a mountain-sized effort or a lot of money could ever pay you back.

The rub comes because he's already used up the benefit from the favor you did him. It has become a thing of the past, almost forgotten now, and long ago

taken for granted. But the enormous debt he owes you remains very real.

He dreads repaying you. And every time he sees you, he's reminded of what he owes, which only makes it loom larger and larger. Gradually resentment begins to fester in him. Guilt irritates this resentment, and soon an "I ain't paying him back" attitude emerges full-blown.

By understanding the process that sours the mind of the ingrate, you can easily regulate the amount of ingratitude you get. You can decide how much ungratefulness you want to receive from a person.

If you're going to avoid thankless behavior altogether, don't do a person any big favors. Then there's no way he can dread owing you a large debt in return. By cutting down on the favors you do, you can limit the amount of ingratitude you'll receive in return.

When you try to reduce the ingratitude you get, bear in mind this rule of thumb: "Nearly everyone is pleased to acknowledge a small debt. Many are grateful in acknowledging a moderate one. But there is hardly a man who does not, for a really great indebtedness, return ingratitude." (La Rochefoucauld, French philosopher)

How intermittent reinforcement improves the formula

After reading my formula for limiting ingratitude, I'm sure you realized that this method is only half of an answer. If you follow this method strictly, you

would altogether stop doing any big favors for people. Certainly it would control ingratitude, but in a simple-minded, radical manner. And only very selfish people could comfortably take on this tight-fisted life-style.

Anyone who can live according to this method must live completely for himself. And this type person belongs where there's only room for one person—in a casket.

The formula of ingratitude by itself doesn't make sense. But it can work very well when it's coupled with intermittent reinforcement. The combination of the two lets you do a person a large favor—which you'll surely want to do at times—and still avoid the ingratitude that usually plagues you after that favor.

Here's how the two work together. First, the formula helps you predict how much ingratitude you'll get after you do a certain favor. (The greater the favor, the more you can expect.) From that you can roughly calculate how much effort you'll need to put out to overcome this predicted backlash of ingratitude.

For example, if you plan to lend your always-broke woman friend five dollars for food until payday, she'll only owe you a tiny debt. So the ingratitude formula would tell you to expect almost no ungratefulness. (Although I've seen friendships split by such trivial amounts of money.) Knowing this, there's no reason to try to combat her ingratitude, since she can't work up much resentment over owing you a fin.

But if you plan to buy your ne'er-do-well a $1500

used car because she's your number-one love, and she must get to work somehow, you're now playing with fire. Since she now owes you a big debt, the ingratitude formula would tell you to expect a strong shot of ungrateful behavior in return. So you should brace yourself and spend a lot of effort trying to stave off ingratitude before you buy the car. Intermittent reinforcement (withdrawing your favors from time to time) comes to your aid at this point.

Intermittent reinforcement stops ingratitude because it keeps a person from taking your openhandedness for granted. Generally, if you've got ingratitude trouble, your problem started when that person began to take your generosity for granted. But using intermittent reinforcement will stop this attitude before it gets started.

For instance, your potentially ungrateful playboy son off at college can't take your financial support for granted if you withdraw his reinforcement from time to time. Insist that he work to pay his own expenses every third semester.

By withdrawing his reinforcement every now and then, you thwart any drift he might make toward ingratitude. Human nature being what it is, in the future he'll be more grateful if you pay for *most* of his education than he would if you paid for *all* of it. He understands the financial sacrifices you were making because he had to make some himself.

Likewise, before you buy your woman friend that $1500 car, insist that she come up with at least $500 of the total, even if she has to take out a loan or

sell her stereo. She'll appreciate how much you worked for the $1,000 you gave her every time she makes a payment on her $500 loan, or looks at the empty place where her stereo once sat. By withdrawing a part of your reinforcement, she won't take you for granted, and you've probably clinched her gratitude for months to come.

Stopping ingratitude in advance

Withdrawing a vital part of your reinforcement as you perform the favor works well. But the most effective way to torpedo ingratitude is to withdraw reinforcement *before* you perform the favor. To do this, you collect your repayment for the debt in advance of doing the favor. Then no debt will remain that the other person might resent.

Maybe you're planning to take a week of your vacation from work to drive an autoless friend cross-country to visit her ailing aunt. If so, get her repayment for the debt in advance. Tell her you'll drive her if she'll help you repaint your apartment before the trip, since she has an artistic flair.

By following this tactic, the slate will be wiped clean after you perform the favor. She doesn't owe you any debt, so there's no dread of repayment that might kindle resentment in her. You've completely avoided any brush with ingratitude by collecting your repayment in advance.

The same pattern of withdrawing reinforcement before you perform the favor also applies to loans—the worst hazard a good friendship can face. I learned

through some hard experiences that loans are the most frequent and bitter source of ingratitude.

When I say, "Withdraw your reinforcement ahead of time on loans," I mean that you should get collateral before you lend the money. Then if your ungrateful debtor defaults on the loan, his TV, stereo, or whatever has repaid his debt in advance. So what is there for either one of you to resent?

Insisting on collateral probably strikes you as a cold way to treat a friend. But experience has convinced me that it's the only way to make a loan and still salvage your friendship. Either get collateral or make the loan a gift. If you're interested, I've already detailed the reasons for my attitude on this subject in Chapter IX, "How to Avoid Being Taken in Financial Dealings."

Is it reality?

Some people who read this book may doubt that my views about ingratitude truly reflect reality. They may feel that a person can't generalize from the con artists and other manipulators I lived among, since con artists aren't normal people.

I would agree that the people I lived with differ from the norm. They have more cunning and fewer scruples than most people. Due to this fact, they showed me more ingratitude in one year than many people see in a lifetime.

But ingratitude certainly isn't confined only to the seamy side of life. You'll run into it from time to time in all walks of life. Look around you, and you'll see

women who sacrifice to put their husbands through medical school, only to be abandoned as soon as hubby becomes an M.D. Parents are constantly rebuked by their children after Mom and Dad sacrifice to put them through college. Because of mean quirks in our human nature, ingratitude will always prosper.

While you may face this problem less often than I have, you're going to have to deal with it sooner or later. When you do, the methods I describe will stop cold the ingratitude people show you. And this is important. After all, learning to combat ungrateful behavior before it starts helps you dodge one of life's most numbing pitfalls.

> "If you pick up a starving dog and make him prosperous, he will not bite you. That is the principal difference between a man and a dog." (Mark Twain)

CHAPTER XVI

What You Get Out of Using People for Your Own Selfish Ends

As I SEE IT, you can use the knowledge this book gives in three ways:

(1) To keep other people from manipulating you,
(2) to manipulate what you want out of people in a reasonably fair and unselfish manner, or
(3) to manipulate other people ruthlessly, showing little regard for their feelings or best interests—in short, using individuals for what you can get out of them.

I wrote this book for the people who plan to apply manipulation according to the first two objectives. However, I'm enough of a realist to know that many

of my readers plan to follow the third course of action—to misuse the manipulative tactics.

Many people who read this book want to learn techniques that will help them siphon off what they want from people and run roughshod over their victims in the process. And these tactics can be used for exactly this purpose. They're powerful enough to give you an awesome control over other people, which you can use any way you want.

Learning manipulation can be compared with becoming a black belt in karate. Just because karate gives you the know-how to win fights doesn't mean you should go out and maim everybody you see. A man who has the ability to destroy people with karate isn't always an evil or dangerous person. Whether he's evil or dangerous depends on how he uses his ability. And karate can be used for decent, honorable ends.

The same holds true with manipulation. Just because you now know how to use people doesn't mean you should do it. Like karate, manipulation is a powerful tool that can be used for purposes that are fair to everybody concerned.

Most successful people get what they want from others in a reasonably unselfish manner. I hope this is the way you plan to put into practice what this book teaches. However, if you decide instead to manipulate people selfishly, you may not find that this is the bonanza you expected. And here I speak from the point of view of your own self-interest, not from a moral perspective.

The problem with using people

I assume that you want to be happy. But the fact is that using people will get you just the opposite: It will make you unhappy. I know this runs contrary to what a lot of people think, so I'll explain why I say this.

First let me say that I'm not a goody-two-shoes type. Here I'm giving you the benefit of the hard reality that I've seen in the jungle. This isn't the way I wish it were; this is the way it is.

The con artists I learned manipulation from also showed me something they didn't plan to teach—something they never even recognized themselves. They showed me what a wasteland a person can make of his life by running over people.

Of all the ruthless manipulators I got to know—from Hardy, to the man who kicked me out of my apartment, to the California man—not one has a real friend in the world. They charm women, but soon lose them because of their own selfishness. Women just don't think they're fit to live around. Every one of these men who had ever married had been divorced from his wife. And the women who fell head over heels for them usually wised up and left after a few weeks.

Men also got tired of being used and quit having anything to do with them. In fact, I suspect that all of these manipulators will die friendless. And I predict that each of them will be the only person in attendance at his own funeral.

I'm sure you know the old saying, "You reap what you sow." That saying has lived for centuries, and there's a reason for it. It's been around a lot longer than "Look out for old number one" has. And you can bet it'll still be here when the "old number one" line is gone. If you could have lived with these selfish men and seen their dark funks and lonely depressions, you'd understand why I like that ancient saying. Incidentally Hardy didn't drink because he enjoyed it.

Selectively using people

When you look at these con artists' unhappy lives, you may say to yourself, "But I'll be smarter. I'll use some people, but I'll be good to the friends I want to keep around."

However, I've heard the same kind of talk from these men. That's exactly what they planned to do. For example, I've heard them say, "I'll never cheat a friend," and, "I'm good to people who are good to me, but just don't ever cross me."

But selectively using people doesn't work because of a facet of human nature that even these ultraclever manipulators failed to take into account: A person's behavior changes very little.

If you take advantage of some people, you'll take advantage of anyone. If you treat some people unselfishly, you'll basically treat everybody you deal with unselfishly. Your behavior changes very little from one relationship to the next.

You wind up treating your friends essentially the

same way you treat the people you don't like. Show me a man who mistreats his enemies, and I'll show you a man who stabs his friends in the back too.

Trying to use people selectively is like an eagle that sees a block of ice about to float over a waterfall. It spots a fish in the ice, so it decides to swoop down, extract the fish, and fly away before the ice goes over the waterfall. But when it goes after the fish, it gets stuck in the ice, and is pulled over the waterfall to its death.

Similarly, trying to treat just one person selfishly and then quit is like the eagle trying to snatch the fish and fly away. You get stuck in that pattern of behavior like the eagle got stuck in the ice. After you've mistreated one person, it feels easier and more natural to do the same in other situations.

You rapidly get caught up in your selfish momentum and follow this path of least resistance. Your human nature doesn't let you suddenly stop using people when it comes to your friends.

So you soon find yourself killing off friendships because you treat your friends basically the same way you do your enemies. As a result, you make yourself miserable by becoming a self-made victim of this country's number one affliction: loneliness.

On the other hand, the techniques of manipulation can be used for reasonable ends—for ends that render you happier and add to your peace of mind.

Taking what you want from people doesn't mean that you do so to the point that you use them. You can, but it's not worth it. If you grab for too much on

this deal, they'll be sure you're cut out of the next one. People soon catch on to your selfishness and end the relationship.

I honestly believe that even if morality was not a factor—although it is—you'll serve your own self-interest by applying the golden rule as you manipulate people. I believe that over the long and short haul, you'll make yourself happier if you do unto others as you would have them do unto you.